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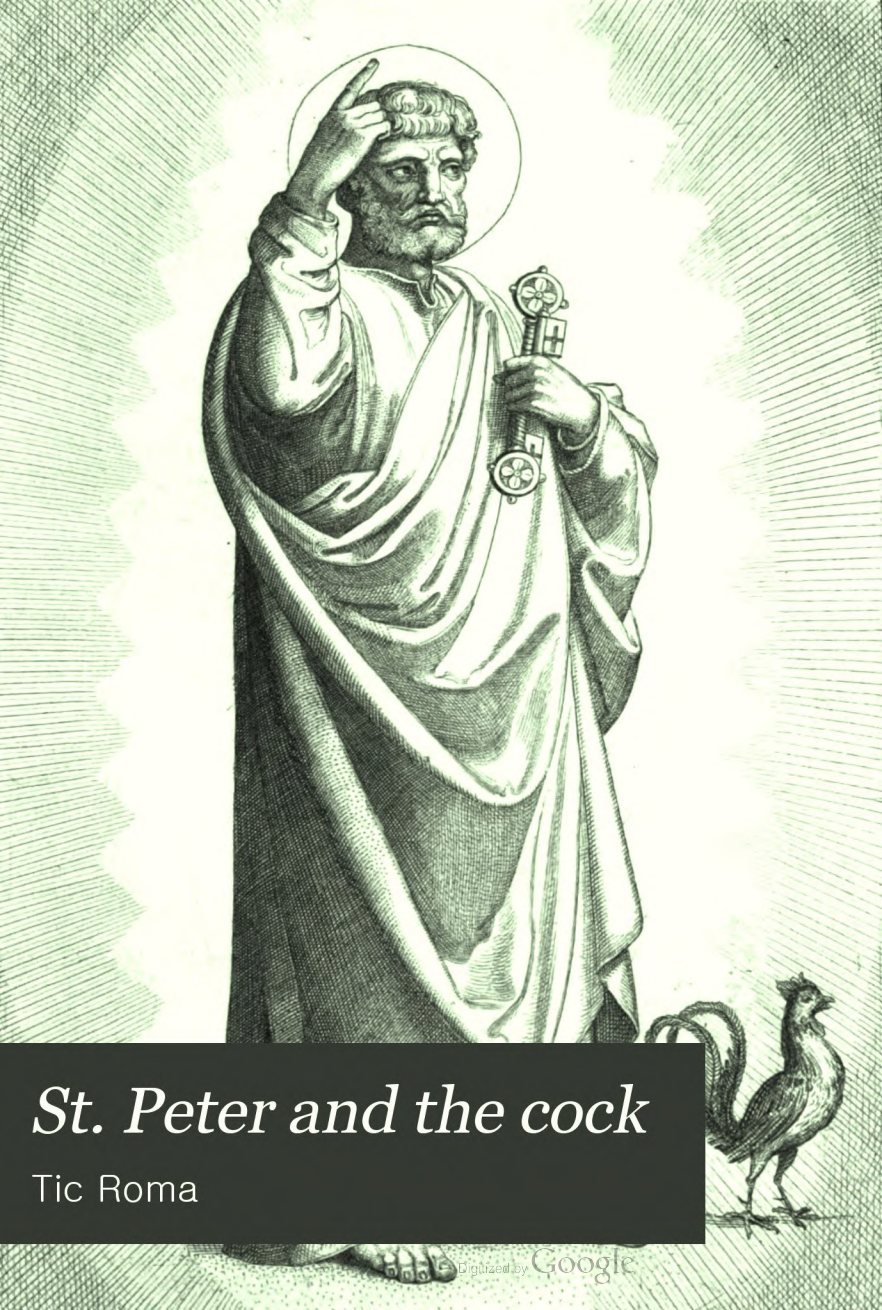

St. Peter and the cock

Tic Roma

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ST. PETER AND THE COCK.

A TALE

FOR

THE END OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

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ST. PETER AND THE COCK.

A TALE

FOR

The End of the Nineteenth Century.

BY

TIC ROMA.

GOOSE. "Father, the world is *very* sick!"
FATHER EEL. "Give it, child, a dose of medicine."
GOOSE. "But how can I make it take it?"
FATHER EEL. "You must season it well with a spice of the devil."

LONDON:
THOMAS RICHARDSON AND SON,
23, King Edward Street, City, E.C.;
AND DERBY.
1885.

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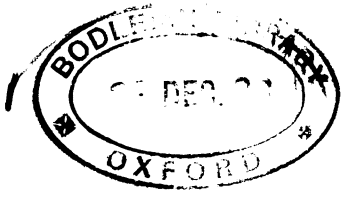

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Dedication.

It is customary to dedicate a book to the person we admire most, love best, or to whom we have reason to feel most grateful. But as we often admire that which we afterwards despise, and love best that which we ought to have loathed, I wish to make certain and dedicate this little book to him towards whom I can have no reason in the lapse of time to change,—I mean *my worst enemy*, or rather, *my best friend*, since that enemy has put me in the way of gaining a prize never to be wrested from me.

If you are hated, thank God for it. If your enemy strikes you, thank God the more. It is when you feel the blow on your head, which stuns you so that you can hardly catch your breath, that you can prove to a loving God that He did not die for you in vain, that you *can forgive* for His sake; and by such an act you open for yourself the gates of heaven, to which your enemies have tried in vain to bar your way.

Therefore, to him who has slandered me most, to him who has invented and circulated about me the blackest calumny, this book is most affectionately and gratefully inscribed by the

AUTHOR.

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PREFACE.

This work is the beginning of a series of Tales which the Author proposes to lay before the public, in which she chooses her principal heroes from some mystical type or figure to be found in the New Testament. In this Tale for the end of the nineteenth century, the Author has endeavoured to explain the mystery of the cock in the Gospel, to describe St. Peter's Bark, to paint the character of St. Peter as its captain, and to show that the cock plays an important part on board that mystical ship, which cannot be properly manned without him; that the cock was destined from the very beginning to represent *everything* which was to be in continual conflict with St. Peter.

The Author has tried to prove that all the dissensions between the Church and State have been caused by the State, who, when she left St. Peter's Bark, stole the cock, and claimed to have over him full jurisdiction; further, that the peace and pros-

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perity of the whole world depend upon the due subordination of those elements, which the cock represents, to the teachings and laws of the Church.

The Author has also tried to explain in a popular form the different questions at issue between the Church and the State, and to show the difference between St. Peter's Bark and his ship of state, and the relative position of the other ships of state sailing round it.

To make St. Peter's Bark perfectly clear to the mind of the reader, it was necessary to describe the craft to whose attacks it is unceasingly exposed; for the majority of mankind consider St. Peter's Bark and his ship of state one and the same thing, whereas, though perfectly unlike and totally distinct, St. Peter's ship of state is an almost necessary appendage to his Bark, which it assists in its mission of propagating the faith.

The Author has likewise tried to show the reason why the Bark has presented such a ludicrous appearance of late, and who the offenders are who have rigged up the old ship, to make a laughing-stock of it.

The aim of the Author has been to excite in the hearts of her readers loyalty to the Holy See, devotion to the Mother of God, and to prove that

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the only security and protection for the State are in the fruits produced by Catholic education.

The little work published as an accompaniment to this volume, entitled "OUR GOOD COUNSELLOR," or a key to "St. Peter and the Cock," will show to whom the Author had recourse to obtain sufficient knowledge of asceticism to write this work, and will assist the reader to concentrate his ideas should he feel disposed to study out the construction of St. Peter's Bark (as the Author has described it), in order to prove its orthodoxy. In this work the descriptions of the materials of which the Bark is composed are scattered through the book, but in OUR GOOD COUNSELLOR they have been collected and put together, and inserted in the Appendix.

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ST. PETER AND THE COCK.

A TALE

For the End of the Nineteenth Century.

CHAPTER I.

On the vigil of the day on which the nineteenth century expired in ruthless agony, the State was nervously pacing a spacious hall, impatiently awaiting her minister, Lord Halsfelt. His lordship was no sooner ushered into her Majesty's presence, than their attention was attracted by a noise in the street.

"Another tumult?" anxiously inquired the State, as they simultaneously advanced towards a window, from which they beheld a large crowd of people, whose eyes were turned upwards, and steadily fixed on a steeple, whose top was adorned, not with a cross, but a beautiful cock. Near its base had been placed, by inimical hands, a statue of an infuriated bull, holding on the top of his horns a cock he had pierced through and through, and was nailing into the ground, by the side of a mutilated cross that had been thrown down when they had put up the cock in its place.

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The air was rent with menacing gestures and angry words. The State turned pale, while her minister looked passively on. At length he remarked: "I wish they would have done with their cock and their bulls. This quarrel is getting serious, and breeding new complications."

"Oh," inquired the State, "is, then, the old quarrel still fermenting?"

"Yes, ma'am, and it is agitated with greater violence and deeper hatred than ever. Never was there a quarrel betwixt Church and State that the people contested more fiercely."

"What is there over which they can wrangle?" interrupted her Majesty. "The question is so simple that it is easily settled. The cock is a good warrior, and belongs to the State, while the bulls, ever bellowing, belong to the Church."

"The Papalins," answered the minister, "will not submit to any such decision; they unanimously declare that most of the bulls were raised for the State; that it is your Majesty's duty to listen to them, and pay them particular attention; and that the cock belongs to the Church; that when you left St. Peter's Bark you snatched up the cock, and carried him off in spite of them."

"And if I did," pertly resumed her Majesty, "I only took what belonged to me, and St. Peter cannot deny it. What does he say about it?"

"He has not yet given his opinion in regard to that point, but he has enjoined upon his children to let the cock alone, and says the cock was all right until you took him away, but now he has the devil in him."

"He says *that*," interrupted the State, "because the

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cock represents the spirit of the age, and is also a figure of my Church."

"Yes," answered the minister, "and he says that he would like to exorcise him."

"Exorcise him!" cried the State, bridling with rage; "St. Peter only wants to get hold of him to put him out of the way, that the world may forget his denials; but he shall be reminded of them, for the cock shall be raised high in the air, that the people may never forget St. Peter's presumption, cowardice, and profanity."

"The cross might remind them," quietly rejoined the minister, as he stroked his moustache, "that to expiate those faults St. Peter was willing to be crucified with his head downward."

"Even so," said the State, without appearing moved in the least by his remark, "that is no reason why we should permit him to be always boasting of it, by raising the cross above the cock after I have solemnly decreed that it should not be so; for I am fully determined that the cock shall cap my ensigns and steeples, for I much prefer him to the eagle. Have you forgotten what my lord archbishop said in regard to the cock, when he was interpreting to us the Scriptures? Did he not show us, in the holy book of Job, where God Himself says that He gave the cock understanding, and He never said so much of the eagle,—no. And did not my lord archbishop declare in solemn decree that it was luck to have the cock with us, but that it was often bad luck to hear him crow?"

"Indeed, ma'am, I never pay any attention to your lord archbishop's interpretations or annotations of Scripture. In regard to the cock, I agree with the Pope, that

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through recent interpretations of Scripture the cock has become an object of superstition."

"Superstition!" retorted the State, with a frown; "that is a misnomer started in Rome in order to put the cock down. Say rather, since he has become an article of faith; for since God has given him understanding, who can tell to what extent He intends he should inspire us?"

The minister raised his brows with an incredulous air, while her Majesty added with emphasis: "You can rely upon this, that I shall never yield a tittle of my rights in regard to him to Rome; and if you say that I must go over, I will have the cock trained to crow at the very sight of a mitre, and he shall follow me wherever I go, and instead of my going over, you will see that St. Peter will be glad to come round."

"I beg your Majesty will renounce any such intention; for it would only widen the breach that already exists between you and St. Peter, and my life-long policy has been to effect a union between you. I have exerted my best influence to put an end to this strife, for I am weary of these tumults and discussions about nothing. What difference does it make to us, so long as we gain our point, whether our ensigns and steeples are capped with cocks, bulls, fishes, eagles, or crosses?"

"If you were a man of a religious turn of mind, you would soon comprehend the difference it makes."

"Perhaps, then, it is well that I am not," the minister rejoined, "for I am now able to view the question dispassionately."

Whilst they were speaking the crowd around the church increased, and were devising means to pull the cock down. As soon as they began climbing the steeple,

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the state party fled. It was easy to distinguish them from the rest, for those who had faith in the cock wore cockades on their breasts. When the State and her minister saw the cockades disappearing, they thought it prudent to withdraw. They had hardly left the window when an explosion was heard, that jarred the palace to its foundations, and covered the ground with mangled bodies that the cock had slain.

A Roman prelate appeared upon the scene, and the few survivors tried to explain to him how they had tried to resent the affront offered to the Pope, and their expressions were interlarded with curses upon those who had put up an infernal machine in the shape of a cock. But the prelate stopped them short. "Behold," said he, pointing to the heaps of the slain, "the effects of *inconsiderate zeal.* St. Peter told you to let the cock alone. The best way to show your devotion to the Pope is, when he speaks to you, obey."

When quiet was again restored in the streets, the State and her minister ventured to approach the window.

"Another miracle," exclaimed her Majesty, as her eyes fell on the wreck that the cock had made. "All this goes to prove the truth of my archbishop's words, that the cock brings misfortune on those who oppose him, and luck to his friends; for you know, my lord, that you lately complained that the realm was overburdened with population."

The minister bit his lip. "I have never lacked faith in such miracles," said he. "But there is no time now to waste in discourse. We must only think of preserving your existence, which you must see is in peril; for whoever dared to perform such a miracle within a stone's throw of the palace, would not hesitate to perform one

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under its foundations, if it suited their interest or gratified their passions. There is but one thing that can save you from the impending crisis, and that is a union with St. Peter. Write him a conciliatory letter, one that will be likely to draw him near you; let it be simple, without cunning or guile, for it is easier to blind the whole rabble than it is to close one of the eyes of the Pope."

"If he is so knowing as that, what will become of us? He may throw dirt in our eyes as easily as he keeps it out of his own."

"Never fear, ma'am; all the dust he can throw in our eyes will never make us weep. It is only that '*non possumus*' that can play the devil with us. But we must try and shoot around it, so as not to butt against it, for it would be of no use, because when St. Peter says '*non possumus*,'* then he puts his foot down, and all creation can't make him raise it."

"He may say '*non possumus*' as much as he likes," spoke up the State: "but he had better not put his foot down on the cock, for if it cost me my kingdom, I would make him take it up."

"Everything was going on smoothly until the question arose as to the possession and position of that beast of a bird," ejaculated the minister, losing his temper.

"Softly," interrupted her Majesty; "speak a little more respectfully of one of our cherished emblems."

"I beg your Majesty's pardon, but this quarrel is thwarting my policy."

"Never mind," interposed the State with vehemence; "we must stand by our colours and respect them, even if by doing so your policy is thwarted."

* "We are not able."

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CHAPTER II.

In Rome sat St. Peter, in one of the halls of the Cæsars. The sceptre of temporal supremacy, which he had wielded during a happy episode in the world's history, lay idly on a table by his side. He looked melancholy and dejected. His regrets, however, were not for lost power, but for the State, who had forsaken him. Many years had passed since her first desertion, and still came into his afflicted ears fresh news of her many levities and infidelities. At length a ray of hope strayed into his soul. The much-erring State had given signs of repentance. He had just received a letter from her, which read as follows:

"Babel, 1st April,

"20th century of the Christian era.

"Your Holiness,

"I throw myself penitent on the charity of your heart; yet when I think how I have abandoned you for the most worthless of creatures, I can scarcely dare hope to be forgiven. But where else now can I look for peace and hope? If you turn a deaf ear to my repentance, there is nothing left for me but despair. Humiliating as may be the confession, I will conceal nothing from you; my broken heart shall be open to you as the day.

"The first creature that seduced my allegiance wore an imperial crown. He was haughty, arrogant, and

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despotic. I was to have no will but his. He was to be my teacher, my morality, my faith, my very god. I could hardly assert my own existence; if I did, his reply was, 'The State, it is I.' I grew weary of him. So long as he was strong and ruled imperiously, he dazzled me; when he faltered, and began inviting Constitutionalism to share my favours, I threw him off. My heart resented the indignities I had suffered. I had been treated like a slave. I dashed my fetters to pieces, and went to every excess. Oh, the horrors of those orgies of reason! Vice climbed upon the altars, blood flowed along the streets.

"My next lover was the one with whom my imperial lord sought to dishonour me,—Constitutionalism. He was a sham, and I threw myself into the arms of Democracy. That was a settler. I found neither honesty, nor manners, nor morals, nor patriotism, nor refinement, nor learning. It was a *progress* downward to savagery. I then tried the brotherhood, which soon degenerating into communism, made advances with the basest effrontery. His violence, his ignorance, his boorishness, shocked me, and I shrank from him with loathing. Besides, I did not feel that my life was safe in his hands. Sated with iniquity, wearied with faithlessness, I long for my old peace, my old faith, my old hope, and my old consolations, and where can I find them but in you, whom I have so ruthlessly betrayed? I am coming home to ask in person for your forgiveness and reconciliation.

"Your most erring but repentant

"STATE."

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"Father," said his Holiness, addressing his confessor, a very determined looking priest, dressed in the habit of St. Ignatius, to whom he handed the letter, "this is very cheering news indeed."

Father Eel read the letter without moving a muscle of his countenance. He then handed it back to St. Peter, and fixing his eyes piercingly upon him, he said, "Holy Father, beware, take care; she is fooling thee. The devil was sick, holy Father. Treasury empty, people murmuring, crown in danger. Were we sure of the sincerity of her repentance! But it looks as if she were trying to steal a march on the Holy Ghost, and enrich herself at the expense of the Church."

"Nothing like it, sir. She has fallen into many sins, but remorse has seized her, and is it for me to reject her, I who should represent charity on earth?"

"I see you yearn to receive once more her who has haunted every slum wherein she could wallow in unbelief, her who has thought scorn of her lawful protector in the orgies of dissolute licence. Is she, holy Father, to return untried, untested, to your home and altar, when you are not even sure that her new virtue is not assumed at the bidding of self-interest, instead of being inspired by repentance? May I dare to remind St. Peter that the State cannot prosper without the Church, but we can get along very well without her?"

"Though she sin seventy times seven," said the Pontiff, "yet would I receive her."

"It is not for an humble son of St. Ignatius to counsel prudence to St. Peter."

"My dear child," said his Holiness, with a smile of paternal sweetness, "are you quite sure that your own

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prudence is above suspicion? If I mistake not, there is no love lost between your Society and the State. Fear you that our reconciliation will be your entire suppression, as in the days of Clement XIV. of blessed memory?"

"*Absit omen!*" replied the Jesuit; "never did the State play the courtezan more viciously than upon that occasion. Still we are not her enemies, holy Father; we are her truest friends in spite of the many times that she has robbed us, and she will do it again at the very first quarrel between you. Many is the time she has given us the chance of obeying the evangelical counsels. We owe her no grudge for that. If her repentance be sincere, and her heart be once more filled with her old allegiance, none will rejoice more fervently than the children of St. Ignatius."

A look of supreme satisfaction illuminated the face of the venerable Pontiff, who longed to be reconciled with her.

CHAPTER III.

A rumour had passed from mouth to mouth, and had spread through Rome, that the State had repented, and was coming home. But the fame of her sins had gone before her, and people shrugged their shoulders, and were slow to believe.

St. Peter had so far yielded to the counsel of his confessor as to delay her reception for several weeks after her arrival. They were weeks of nervous misgivings and vexatious impatience on the part of the State, for the

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delay had about it an air of indifference which her Majesty regarded as intended to humiliate her. Her minister tried to pacify her by showing her that the delay was necessary in order that certain preliminaries might be arranged, for it was necessary to decide what language should be spoken, who should be present, and what journals should have the privilege of first heralding to the world the accounts of that most interesting event. The Papalins preferred the Latin tongue, but the State, supported by the press, objected, fearing that in that tongue the Papalins might overreach them; so she succeeded in having a law passed that plain English should be spoken in all their interviews. For the benefit of the public the American lightning printing press was engaged. This was a concession made by St. Peter to humour the impatience of the State, for it was rumoured that her Majesty had remarked to a reporter that the movements of the Church reminded her of those of a toad, who describes himself in his diary as taking a century to raise his leg, and another century to put it down again. Meanwhile the State was not idle. Before starting for Rome her lord archbishop had warned her not to allow herself to be entrapped by those wily Churchmen, and go over to Rome, but to make Rome come around to her. He presented her with a beautiful cock that he had blessed, accompanied with the prophetic assurance that no ill would betide her so long as she followed his inspirations, and did not lose one of his feathers, for they possessed the same virtue and power as relics.

The minister gasped with horror when he discovered that the lord archbishop had presented her Majesty a cock for good luck, and that she had resolved that this cock

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should accompany her wherever she went. He knew that it would be useless to remonstrate with her, as the belief in the good or malign influence of the cock had become one of the most popular beliefs in the realm. Already medals had been struck off bearing his effigy, and the people were wearing them about their necks, believing that so long as they had his likeness about them they would never lack understanding or pluck.

Since their arrival in Rome the most famous masters had been employed to train the cock to crow and to roost high at the sight of a mitre. But alas! they all failed, for the only thing they could make of him was a fighter, and they acknowledged that if he fought it was only because he liked it, for they could not make him do anything that he did not choose. These favourable reports of the cock's ungovernable will brought multitudes over to believe in him, for they thought they discovered in him a most striking resemblance to the spirit of Luther; so they listened attentively to whatever was said of him, and heard with awe the relations of the miracles daily attributed to him.

The State was so much gratified with the turn things had taken that she called her minister's attention to the fact, that since her arrival many papists had come over to her Church.

"Humph!" said the minister, "Is not your majesty aware that there are souls so base that they will embrace any religion professed by the State, even though she should bow down to a giraffe, an ass, or a golden calf? I come to inform your Majesty that the preliminaries are arranged, and St. Peter is ready to receive you. You have now only to fix the day."

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"But I have still a very important preliminary to arrange," responded the State, "before I can fix the day. The cock's feathers have to be counted, for I shall not risk taking him into the Vatican until I know how many there are on his back."

"That will involve a new appointment," replied the minister, "and the position will be no sinecure for whoever performs the duties of such an office faithfully."

"My lord archbishop's nephew has accepted the position," said the State, "and he has taken a Chinaman for his secretary, who will do the work; so there is no doubt but the functions of the new office will be performed conscientiously."

They were here interrupted by the lord chamberlain in waiting, who handed the State a paper. It was the Chinaman's report, in which he declared it to be his *firm belief* that there were four thousand four hundred and forty-four feathers on the cock.

"I am sure it is correct," said the minister.

"Wait a bit," added the State, not wishing to give too easy credence to the report of a Chinaman in so important a matter.

"I think," rejoined the minister, "that your Majesty should have it recorded without further inquiry."

"No, no," said the State, "I must be cautious." And she gave an order to have the Chinaman summoned before her ecclesiastical council, which was then in session, and busily engaged deciding upon a matter of trade.

The Chinaman no sooner made his appearance than he readily informed the august assembly, by signs and bad English, that he first killed a cock which closely resembled the one so highly prized by her Majesty, and pulled

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out of him a square inch of feathers, and counted them carefully; he then measured the dead cock, and multiplied the number of square inches by the number of feathers he had pulled out and counted.

The council gravely shook their heads, and without leaving their seats rejected the Chinaman's report. It was evident to all present that a cock's feathers could not be counted by measure, for they were much thinner under his wings, on his head and his legs, than they were on his breast, his back, his neck, and under his tail; besides, he had counted the feathers of another cock, which bore no relation to the one that her Majesty's lord archbishop had blessed, beyond a resemblance.

"So much for cheap labour!" they exclaimed, as they threw aside the report.

As despatch was considered necessary, an American was engaged to fill the Chinaman's place. He sent in his report in fifteen minutes, in fact, before the committee who had appointed him had time to rise from their seats. His report was read, which stated that there were only two thousand two hundred and twenty-two feathers in all. The report made a favourable impression, for it seemed much more probable to the court that that number was correct, instead of a number that was double that score. But the council, not wishing to be too credulous, requested the American to state how he had counted them.

"Counted them!" he exclaimed, with a farcical smile, as he turned red in the face; "I'll be gall darned, gentlemen, if I could catch the cock, so I made a rough guess."

His report was rejected as too speculative, and his veracity impeached, as nothing was ever yet known to be too fast for an American. He was incontinently dis-

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missed without any remuneration for his services, which fact was observed by a burly-looking Irishman appointed in his place, who, after giving orders not to be disturbed except at meal-time, had locked himself up when he began counting the feathers. Weeks passed, and when he had nearly finished, instead of sending in his report, he sent in his bill, telling them that that must be settled before he could give them the result of the count, adding that in the meantime he would require a larger supply of whiskey, because it was the hardest work he had ever done; for it was easier in a broiling sun to carry bricks and mortar up a ladder, than it was to sit in a palace and count a fighting cock's feathers.

The moment he made his appearance the board was convened, and the Irishman, who had received his pay, thus addressed them: "May it plase yer riverences and honours, there are one thousand three hundred and siventy-one fithers in all, which includes his pin-fithers and quills, but not his comb, nails, spurs, or bill."

He then turned on his heels and left, saying he had a pressing engagement with his grandmother. He was shouted at to halt. The Irishman, not hearing them, started off on a run, but he was soon overtaken and brought back by force. After being reprimanded for taking such quick leave, the council requested him to prove to them that his statement was correct.

"If you don't belave me," said he, "shure and there is the cock, and you can count them yerselves."

Notwithstanding this fair proposal, they were not satisfied. However, when they addressed him again it was with a more courteous tone. "Please tell us, sir, how you counted them."

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"Oh, no," answered the Irishman, rolling up his eyes, "I would not tell you that for the world; it would be letting the public into the secret of my profession, and it might ruin my business as a fowl-fither-counter."

"Where have you practised your profession hitherto, sir?"

"In my grandmother's poultry yard, may the Lord have mercy on her soul; and the reason it took me so long was, that I have been out of practice since the ould woman died."

"Is that the grandmother," inquired the board, "you have the engagement with?"

"Yes, yer honours," he replied, "for I have jined a spiritual circle, and the ould woman promised to meet me at Teddy O'Brian's shop on the corner, and she said that I could always tell when her spirit was there, by the raps on the counter."

He was then permitted to leave, and his report was submitted without further comment to her Majesty. The minister no sooner glanced over it than he earnestly besought her Majesty to accept it, and to have it recorded.

But the State looked at it with an air of distrust, as she remarked, "You also insisted upon my accepting the Chinaman's report, which shows that your judgment in these grave matters is at fault; not at all surprising, however," she added, "as this question comes under the competency of the spiritual order."

"I humbly acknowledge my insufficiency," replied the minister, "in questions of this sort; but I know it is expedient that this affair should be settled. And as your Majesty is chief arbitrator in all matters concerning your Church, I beg you will cut this matter short, so that we

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may fix the day for your interview with St. Peter, which I acknowledge interests me more than to know the number of feathers there are on the cock.

The State yielded to the persuasions of her minister, and accepted the Irishman's report.

CHAPTER IV.

As the preliminaries on both sides were arranged, the auspicious day for the interview at length came. The minister called on the State before the appointed hour, to try and persuade her not to take the cock with her.

"The whole city," said he, "is in a ferment with regard to the result; but no one appears to take any interest in the grave questions that are to be discussed, all they seem to think or care about is, what is going to happen to the cock. Your Majesty should have heard the betting last night: some staked their fortunes that the cock would carry the day; others, that if you took him in the Vatican, he would never come out again. My nephew made a large wager that if you took him with you, he would bring your Majesty luck, and would come out of the Vatican safe; and I am willing to bet any amount that if the cock goes with you, there will be bloodshed this day; yes, ma'am, depend upon it there will be bloodshed."

The State, without heeding his last remark, inquired, "Was it your nephew, the jolly canon, that bet he would bring me luck?"

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"Yes," replied the minister; "and when he loses he usually calls on me to pay for him."

"He shall be made archbishop," said the State; "and take the cock with me I must, if only to cede to public opinion."

"The policy of concession has always been a fatal one, ma'am; it encourages enemies and alienates friends."

"The cock shall go with me, any way," spoke up the State, "if only to remind St. Peter that his record has not always been the brightest."

"I am afraid that your Majesty will see that these Churchmen are not so easily teased, and that the feather that we intended should tickle their throats, will stick in our own."

"We must trust a little to Providence," answered the State, firmly. "I have given orders that all my religious communities shall pray that the cock may crow at the first sight of St. Peter."

The minister, seeing that expostulation was useless, tried to prepare himself for the worst. He wished that his nephew had not bet on him, for it made him take an interest in the cock's safety in spite of himself.

When the cortège was ready to start, the cock, without making any resistance, permitted the State to take him and hold him under her arm. As they passed through the Eternal City on their way to the Vatican, it was with difficulty that the royal cortège could make its way through the crowds, who were curious to see if her Majesty intended to stand by her colours, or was going to cower to the Papalins, and denounce the spirit of the age. But the instant they caught sight of the cock, the air was

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rent with cries of "Long live the cock! long live the State!" and nothing could be heard but crowing.

Everybody, without distinction, wore a cockade. Those who declared the cock belonged to the Church, wore cockades of white and gold, pierced with bull's horns; while those who declared that he belonged to the State, made theirs of red and blue, pierced with a cock's claw. Ladies wore them on their bonnets, men and children on their bosoms, horses had them fastened to their heads, and dogs had them tied around their necks. When they reached St. Peter's square, a clash of trumpets and shouts of welcome told that the State was there.

The magnificent hall of the Vatican used for public receptions had nothing about it to distinguish its appearance from what it bore on ordinary occasions. The ecclesiastical arrangements were of the simplest description. What there was of temporal splendour and royal dignity was reserved for the State. Only the cardinals retained a certain amount of worldly show, supposed to contribute to their dignity as princes of the Church. They occupied seats on a raised dais, whereon was erected the throne of State, glorious in gold and ermine, by the side of St. Peter's chair, austere in its simplicity. The rest of the assembly occupied places on either side of the hall. There was another flourish of trumpets, and the doors were thrown open. Two heralds with stentorian lungs cried out "The State!" A tremor of agitation shakes her frame. All her haughtiness of presence for a moment deserts her. A shade of distrust might have been detected in the looks of the cardinals, for there was nothing in the demeanour of the State that betokened the humility of a penitent. The eyes of Father Eel were upon her:

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he read her through and through, yet no one was more disposed to give her a cordial welcome. The only one who showed any emotion was St. Peter. He could not conceal his delight. His first efforts were directed towards reassuring her discomposure; and in a manner wherein was blended affability, dignity, and real affection, moving towards her, he begged her to be seated. At this invitation the State without more ado sat down in St. Peter's chair. The Pope supposed the mistake to be one rather of forgetfulness or ignorance than malice, and treated it with his usual *bonhomie*. Meanwhile the cock, which was then concealed by her mantle, became restless, and her Majesty with her elbow pressed him closer to her, which, instead of pacifying him, appeared to make him desperate, for he began wriggling and twisting until he succeeded in disengaging a wing. It was then impossible to manage him, and something was heard to r-r-r-rip; it was the cock's spur going through her Majesty's lace, and in another breath he was seen crossing the floor like a flash.

The sight of the cock brought a smile to the corner of the cardinals' mouths. St. Peter laughed as he softly remarked to the Jesuit, "The State has brought the cock as a peace-offering. He has caused her trouble enough, she should be glad to get rid of him."

"I doubt," replied the Jesuit, "if she means to part with him."

"You will see," continued the Pontiff, in a tone audible only to Father Eel, "that before she takes leave she will present him to me as a mark of her deep contrition; and that is the way she will settle the question."

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The Jesuit shook his head as the Pontiff turned towards the State.

"Madam," said he, "the holy state of matrimony is a type of the union betwixt Christ and His Church. The body must be subordinate to the head. The Church can very well occupy the chair of state, if expedient or necessary, *but the State can never sit in the chair of Peter.*"

"I do not think so at all," replied the State. "Yours is a merely spiritual jurisdiction; mine is the supreme temporal one; and such being the case, you are my subject."

The cardinals' eyes went up to the roof; the Jesuit knit his brows.

"That is to say," said the Pope, quietly, "that the greater must be subject to the less, the spiritual to the temporal, God to man."

"Do you mean to call yourself God?" asked the State.

"Far be it from us, such blasphemy!" replied St. Peter; "but in all that concerns the moral government of mankind we wield His power upon earth by His express commission. It would ever be my wish, for the sake of edification, to pay the utmost deference to your Majesty's temporal authority. But that is an authority which affects only the material interests of man, and, except on the supposition that he is a creature without faith and without hope, it must be subordinate to that authority entrusted to us, alike over princes and beggars, by Christ Himself,—the power of the keys."

"Keys!" exclaimed the State, shrugging her shoulders and tossing her head, "my keys are as good as yours."

"Your keys, ma'am!" said the Pope, in a tone so audible that he could be heard throughout the spacious

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hall; "I would like to know what your keys are; I beg you will inform me."

After a moment's reflection the State deliberately began, "*Mon* — keys" —

She then paused, while St. Peter exclaimed: "Monkeys! God bless your Majesty for having confessed the truth, for your keys are nothing else, and you have been *aping* us with them for centuries."

The State gave a nervous cough. Her minister came to her relief.

"Her Majesty," said he, "made a mistake; she made use of the French pronoun *mon* for the English one, *my*."

"Was it not the State," quickly retorted the Pope, "that made the law that *plain* English should be spoken here? You put a slight indeed upon her Majesty, by saying that she is capable of enacting a law, and then be the first to break it."

"No, no," vociferated the cardinals, "the State would not do such a thing."

It was the minister's turn now to be taken aback, and he threw an angry glance at the sacred college, while St. Peter continued:

"I insist, moreover, that her Majesty has not made a mistake, that her definition of her keys is perfectly correct. Nothing could be clearer, more truthful, or concise."

"But," exclaimed the minister, impatiently, "I am certain that her Majesty never intended to give that for her definition."

"I beg that your lordship will cease to detract her Majesty in the presence of this august assembly," said St. Peter, "and try to make us believe that by her intention

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she is going to lose the reward due to this humble and honest confession."

The minister whispered to the State, "You know that the American lightning press is here, and your definition of your keys is now heralded all over the world."

"And if it is," replied the State, "I do not find my definition so very absurd. It was a slip of the tongue, to be sure, but it might have been worse."

"Hardly," answered the minister.

"You cannot appreciate those things," said the State, "as you are not versed in mystical theology. Did not St. Peter acknowledge that we were imitators? Don't you understand that we have imitated them so well, that mine are as good as theirs? My definition was merely a figure, showing that my keys were good imitations; and I think that I showed more *esprit* by defining them in one word, than I should if I had bored the people by a long explanation that they might not have understood half so well."

The minister here arose, and after escorting her Majesty to the chair of state, approached his Holiness, and asked him if he would condescend to make clear to his mind the precise power of *his* keys.

"I can only show and prove the power of my keys," replied St. Peter, "to those who believe in the New Testament Scriptures, and who moreover believe that the words of the Evangelists have the meaning which they are ordinarily intended to convey."

"That is only fair," said the minister.

"Well, there is a consent of these inspired writers in the narrated fact that the Divine Founder of the Church said to Peter, 'I give to thee the keys of the kingdom of

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heaven; whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven.' Our Lord thus conferred upon Peter a power which we call, quoting Christ's words, the power of the keys, and you see that He gave them to Peter, and not to Cæsar."

"Pardon, your Holiness," interrupted the minister, "but at the risk of exposing my ignorance, I would suggest that those words, even according to your own showing, were addressed to a person who flourished somewhere about twenty centuries ago. It is surely a slight tax on our credulity to appropriate those words to yourself."

"My lord," replied St. Peter, "authority and jurisdiction, even in civil government, are they attributes of the individual or the office? Let us take, for example, the case of England or of the United States. Has the supreme authority in those states been bestowed upon the particular individual who is now reigning in the one, or upon the individual who for the time is the president of the other? I will ask your lordship if they are not conferred upon the *office*, in the one case of sovereign of England, and the other of president of the United States?"

"No doubt that is so," said the minister, looking somewhat confused.

"It is precisely thus with the ecclesiastical government of the Church. The awful authority, the commission of which I have quoted, was not conferred upon the man Simon Peter, to be limited to him, and never to pass beyond him, but upon the *office* to which he had been appointed by his Divine Master as His vicar upon earth, to be used for the benefit of all mankind in every age who choose to avail themselves of it. Christ foretells the per-

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petuity of the office and authority He confers upon St. Peter when He says, 'Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.'"

When St. Peter ceased speaking, her Majesty said to her minister, in a low tone, "It will never do to keep the people so long in suspense. You had better leave at once. I will follow as soon as I have had a few more words with St. Peter. And be sure," she added, in a still lower tone, "and take the cock with you, that the people may see that they dared not touch him here, and that he has carried the day."

St. Peter did not catch her Majesty's last words, but he knew that she said something about the cock, and he thought that she had told her minister to go and pick him up, and deliver him to the Church.

Every face lighted up when the minister approached the cock, for the majority had bet that he would come out of the Vatican safe, without even losing a feather. But when the minister attempted to take him up, the cock went across the floor like a shot.

St. Peter, divining that it might be difficult to catch him, said to her Majesty, "It is not necessary for his lordship to catch him; let him say what he has to say without him."

"No, no," quickly answered the State; "his lordship must take him."

"May it please your Majesty," replied the minister, approaching the State, quite out of breath, "before I can take him I have first got to catch him."

Lord Halsfelt wished to get him out safe, cost what it might, not only on account of his nephew's bet, but

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because the whole populace were then on tiptoe, anxiously awaiting the result, and he felt that the peace and prosperity of the state depended upon his catching the cock. He was acting, however, entirely against his policy, for during his whole diplomatic career he had strenuously avoided getting entangled in the cock and bull quarrel. But fate had at length caught him, and he was obliged to extricate himself the best he could. He now approached the cock stealthily, but this time the cock faced him boldly. The minister got directly in front of him, and bending deliberately with outstretched arms, he tried to corner him; but the cock drew back, and made a spring for his face, leaving in his cheek a deep gash.

The minister beat a hasty retreat, as he pulled out his handkerchief to wipe the blood from his cheek; but before he could recover from the shock the cock was far away, on the top of a picture frame, where he flapped his wings and crowed, which was a bad sign, and made those present who were in opposition to him moan. The minister, when he heard the moans, rushed towards him again. This time the minister was too quick for him, for he grabbed him by the tail; but the cock gave a jerk, and made his escape, leaving his tail in the minister's grasp.

The minister now made a wild rush for him, and suddenly stooping in order to seize him, tripped over him, and nearly fell on his face, while the cock perched himself on the back of a chair and crowed louder than before. Those who had bet on him became terribly excited when they heard the crowing and saw the feathers flying, for they knew that it foreboded bad luck to them. Father Eel was standing near the door, reading his breviary, and

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seemed lost to all sublunary considerations, whilst here and there a cardinal could be seen stooping down and picking up the feathers.

The minister at length paused in the chase to wipe the blood and perspiration from his face. Her majesty, approaching him, inquired, "I wonder what the cardinals mean to do with the feathers. Do you think that they mean to wear them in their hats for good luck?"

"No, no," ejaculated the minister, out of breath, "they want them for their beds, that are not as soft as the world supposes."

"You know," spoke her Majesty, greatly excited, "that they must give every one of them up."

"But, ma'am, let us get the cock out of here first," the minister exclaimed, "before we go to war about his feathers."

Then, crossing the floor at a rapid pace, he caught him by the head as he was about to alight on a bench, but with a twist and a jerk the cock got away, leaving his comb in the minister's hand. "My country's curses on your head," he vociferated, as he threw the comb away, and again rushed after him, while the cock glided before him like a flash, and ran close to the door where the Jesuit stood, who, raising his foot, caught him under it and held him fast.

The cock this time did not crow, but he gave a loud screech, and then wriggled, and twisted, and scratched, but his efforts were vain, for he could no more get away than if he had been riven to the floor by a nail.

As the minister approached him to pick him up, the Jesuit slightly raised his foot, with his eyes still resting on his book. The minister, supposing he was going to

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release him, stooped down to take him, but the Jesuit, instead of letting the cock go, brought his foot down with greater force, when snap went a bone, which made the cock scream louder than before.

The Jesuit's attention was now drawn from his book by the minister, who was stooping beside him. "I beg your lordship's pardon," said he, "have you lost anything? Shall I help you find it? Perhaps we can see better with the door open." Suiting the action to the word, he opened the door wide, while an awkward movement of his foot sent the cock limping down the steps.

"No, thank you," replied the minister, "I can see very well."

He then left the Jesuit, and hastened to her Majesty to inform her what had happened, without being able to state, however, whether it was the cock's back-bone or his leg that had snapped. The State requested he should hasten after him, that no greater evils might befal him, and looking at the Jesuit, her cheeks assumed the colour of the setting sun, her lips were white and compressed, while her eyes flashed fire. But the Jesuit, all unconscious and unmoved, was meekly saying his office in a corner.

CHAPTER V.

By permission of his Holiness the cardinals withdrew. Father Eel was following their example, but was requested by the Pontiff to remain. He took a seat in a remote part of the room, and continued to say his office. The rest of the assembly had already withdrawn, and St. Peter and the State were alone.

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St. Peter was surprised at the absence of the minister, and he inquired of the State if he had taken his departure.

"Yes," replied her Majesty, "he has gone to look after the cock."

"I suppose," said St. Peter, "that he will return with him soon?"

"I should think not," said the State, curtly, as she threw an angry glance at the Jesuit, "when he was turned out of here so unceremoniously, and no one yet knows the extent of his injuries."

"You did right to bring him with you," said St. Peter; "it will serve to bury old differences."

"What must my people have thought," she excitedly exclaimed, "when they saw him going out from here in such a mutilated condition?"

"That," replied St. Peter, "can be easily explained."

"Easily explained!" retorted the State; "they will imagine that I have abandoned to your Holiness my claim."

A shade of anxiety spread over the Pontiff's features, for he then divined her Majesty's intention in bringing the cock with her, and knew that she had done it to harass and humiliate him, and he could see that their union must be indefinitely postponed, because there could be no union between them so long as the State retained such a disposition. Still he did not despair, but hoped to win her in time with patience.

"I trust," said he, sadly, "that your Majesty does not take part in those disgraceful broils that are weakening the sinews of the nation."

"I am obliged to defend my colours," replied the State,

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"and you know that the cock is my most cherished emblem. He is the figure of my Church."

"There I agree with you," interposed St. Peter.

The State's face lighted up with satisfaction as St. Peter uttered those words. She felt that it was a great concession for him to make, and she added, "I have quite discarded the eagle, and have taken him down from my standards, and put the cock up in his stead."

"I am very sorry to hear it," replied St. Peter, mournfully, "that with your own hands you have been tearing down the emblems of royalty. I supposed that it was the people who were committing these outrages in defiance of your Majesty's wishes."

"St. Peter," said the State, "are you not aware that the cock also represents the spirit of the age?"

St. Peter nodded an assent, while the State added, with a quizzical look, "Your Holiness is prejudiced on account of old associations, and you are a little jealous, too, of the number of miracles that are being performed every day in his name, for you see that my Church now is not behind yours in anything."

"Two milleniums," said St. Peter, "leave little to be wondered at, but I confess my surprise if your Majesty attributes the miracles to which you allude to any other power than licence and gunpowder."

"Of course," replied the State, "it is for your interest to decry them, and pretend that you have no faith in them."

"They are too absurd, ma'am, to reason over; but I agree with your Majesty that the cock is a correct emblem of the spirit of this age, for he represents to the fullest extent the spirit of iniquity, pride, arrogance, contention,

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disobedience, obstinacy, cruelty, ingratitude, curiosity, in fact, he represents everything that is faithless and perverse."

"Ah," interrupted the State, jauntingly, "I knew that you would give him a bad name, I know, I know."

"Well, if your Majesty knows it, I am glad to hear it," spoke up the Pontiff, earnestly, "for there never was a creature, since the devil got possession of him, that shows more perverseness and dulness of comprehension."

"I expected," said the State, "that your Holiness would try to depreciate his intelligence. But there is the Bible to prove that he is the wisest of birds, for God Himself says that He gave the cock understanding, and who could doubt it after witnessing his behaviour to-day? I never before beheld such sagacity, such dash, and such bravery. Your Holiness will see that his crowing, too, foreboded the downfall of the ministry, for he crowed twice over the minister when he was trying to catch him."

St. Peter looked a little discouraged when he replied, "Is it possible, ma'am, that your infidelity has gone to such lengths, that your faith now is superseded by the most barbarous superstition? Let me, I beseech you, before we proceed any further, instruct you in your old faith, which it appears that you have entirely lost."

"No, no," said the State, "your prosing would make me drowsy, for I get wearied easily. My constitution is not as strong as it was."

"I fear," added St. Peter, "that your dissipated habits have been undermining it."

"It was for that reason that my minister proposed a reconciliation between us, hoping that a quiet life would in time restore it."

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"The first thing that I should recommend," said St. Peter, "would be an emetic."

"I am afraid," replied the State, "that your prescription will be too bitter for me to take."

"Father Eel," said his Holiness, "is an excellent physician; he will sugar the powder over for you, so that it will taste as sweet as honey."

"Oh," exclaimed the State, apparently affrighted, "are you going to let that Jesuit attend me? I hope that you will not let him bleed me."

"Madam," replied St. Peter, "you must not take the Jesuits for assassins. They have only to look at your arms to see that you have had too much lancing, and by the marks on your 'temples' any one can see that there have been too many leeches applied to them already."

"Are they, then, so visible?" inquired the State.

"Yes," continued St. Peter; "and the Jesuits are also skilful surgeons; they can perform, without the slightest danger, the most delicate operations."

"I am afraid," interrupted the State, "that they might break my bones in order to show me how skilfully they can splice them."

"Madam," said St. Peter, solemnly, "I find you in all things too suspicious. To effect a perfect cure you must have confidence in your physicians, and you require a skilful surgeon if you wish to have all your faculties restored."

Here St. Peter paused, for he disliked to recall unpleasant reminiscences.

The State observed his diffidence. "Speak your mind freely, I implore you," she urged. "I should like to know what you imagine ails me."

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St. Peter was about to begin, but again faltered. The State showed signs of impatience. At length he summoned all his courage, and said to her, "I suppose you know that you have an ugly squint in your right eye?"

The State's face became crimson as she indignantly exclaimed, "How can you make use of such a vulgar term?"

"It was your Majesty," quickly replied St. Peter, "that laid down the law that we should speak plain English. You can only realize how odious some of your bye-laws are when their observance is forced upon yourself."

"Nevertheless," retorted the State, "whenever in future your Holiness refers to the contraction of that ligament, you will oblige me by calling it a cast. It is considered a great beauty. I was born with it."

"No, no," interposed St. Peter, "you were not born with it; it was the cock that stuck his spur in it and gave it that ugly twist."

"No, indeed," insisted the State, "the cock never did it; I was born with it, and it is the handsomest feature in my face."

"Can it be possible," mournfully replied St. Peter, "that you have permitted flatterers to delude you to such an extent as to make you believe that so serious a blemish can be aught but a defect? Let me assure you, ma'am, that the State, to become great and to rule wisely, should be able to see straight: and so you did at the dawn of your existence, when you acknowledged my supremacy as head of the Church. But that day when you were so bent on having your own way, and I tried by kind words to restrain your impetuous and ungovernable temper, you

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got into such a pet that you snatched up the cock, and declared you would clear out, and would do as you pleased in spite of me. Why, that day, you know as well as I do, that the cock nearly scratched your eyes out in his efforts to get away from you to come back to me."

"St. Peter," interrupted the State, petulantly, "if I did carry off the cock, you know very well that he always belonged to me."

"I am not now disputing your claim to him," replied St. Peter; "I am only trying to recall to your mind the time when he put his foot in your eye, and you began to see obliquely."

"Then you acknowledge, do you, that the cock belongs to me?"

"I have not said a word in regard to your claim," replied St. Peter, firmly; "but I do insist that your sight will require delicate treatment in order to restore it, and I advise you to let yourself be treated by Father Eel."

"But, you know, St. Peter, that I hate Jesuits."

"I know," replied the Pontiff, "that you have always treated them like a cruel stepmother, whose only care of them was to strip them, and beat them, and starve them."

"Because," said the State, "whenever you would provoke me, they would always rush between us, and I would have to beat them off before I could hit you."

"Alas! I remember those days; perhaps it were better never to recall them."

"I am willing to forget and forgive, too," said her Majesty. "But what about my people? My existence will be in peril if they imagine that I am sincere and really devoted to you."

"The conversion of your people can only be effected by

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degrees. They have been misled by designing men, and have no malice in their hatred of me. But I do not underrate the difficulties nor even the dangers you will have to encounter; for it is true of states as of men, that the way to the crown is by the cross. States have been martyrs as well as individuals; Ireland, for example, and Poland."

At the thought of the long sufferings of these afflicted countries, endured with such heroic patience for the confessorship of the faith, St. Peter, overcome by his emotions, sank back in his chair, and buried his face in his hands.

The State, respecting a grief to which she was herself insensible, was about to withdraw, when the thought occurred to her that it was the moment to get something out of him.

"St. Peter," she said, in the tenderest of tones, "my minister has served me zealously for many years, and I always like to reward my faithful servants; I should like so much to give an archbishopric to his nephew, who is an admirable man, and one really devoted to your Holiness."

Upon hearing those words, St. Peter replied with great firmness, "Reward your faithful servants, ma'am, if you like, but with rewards in your gift, not in mine. I do not intend to meddle with your appointments, still less must you meddle with mine. I alone can appoint to an archbishopric."

"You!" exclaimed the State, with a nervous laugh and an expression of astonishment.

"Yes, ma'am, I! and you ought to know that such an

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appointment is strictly and only within the competence of the spiritual order."

"What about the ten thousand a year?" asked the State, slyly; "is that, too, in the spiritual order?"

"Consecrated to God, ma'am, consecrated to God," replied St. Peter in rather a huffy tone.

The State was on the point of becoming a little profane, but she controlled herself, though her face got very red, as she exclaimed, "Then I would like to know what is the temporal order, for if the income belongs to the spiritual order, as well as the episcopal office, it seems to me that there is no temporal order at all."

"My capricious spouse," St. Peter answered, "you have two splendid services, your army and your navy. All appointments to them, and the whole regulation of them, belong to the temporal order. The appointment of your judges and magistrates, the election of your legislators, the bestowal of all temporal rank, the whole regulation of your customs and excise, and indeed a multitude of similar responsibilities, too numerous to particularize, are strictly within the temporal order, which limits your Majesty's prerogatives. The appointment of an archbishop is to the care of souls, and is of a most exalted and responsible nature. In that I cannot allow any one to interfere, for I am the source of all spiritual jurisdiction upon this earth. So awful a responsibility I have not the power, even if I had the inclination, to share with any secular authority, however exalted."

"A pretty prospect!" she exclaimed; "I am to be thoroughly ignored. I suppose you intend to be the schoolmaster of the whole world, too; and I tell you

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frankly that I mean to have my people educated just as it suits me."

"Instructed, if you please, ma'am," interrupted St. Peter; "education is quite a different thing."

"Pray," inquired the State, "what is this difference you make between education and instruction?"

"Instruction," said St. Peter, "is the information of the brain. Education is the leading out of the whole inner being of heart, and soul, and mind, from infancy into mature manhood, by information and discipline alike."

"Oh, well, I will instruct, and leave you to educate," said the State, pertly.

"You have no choice in the matter," replied St. Peter, calmly. "It is impossible for the state to educate. Your schools are compelled to exclude religion, and without religion there can be no education. Information of the brain is a part of education, but quite a subordinate one; and when the state covers the land with schools which profess to supply only that subordinate part, and calls it by the name of education, she opens a wide road along which she beckons all her youth to perdition."

"I see," muttered the State, "that there will be no living in peace with you."

"Not if you oppose my views on education, and attempt to meddle with my keys," answered St. Peter, firmly. After a pause he added, "It is my wish that your Majesty be thoroughly instructed, and then I will call upon you to make the noblest use of your liberty."

Upon reflection, the idea did not displease the State of being placed in intimate relations with Father Eel. She owed him a grudge for having put his foot on the cock, and she was glad of an opportunity of studying his

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disposition, to see what torture she could inflict upon him that would aggravate him most; and hoping to soften St. Peter's mood, she threw upon the Jesuit a most gracious look when she arose to depart. "Since your Holiness," said she, "desires me to be instructed and treated by Father Eel, it is sufficient reason for me to wish to listen to him, and to resign myself to his manipulations."

As St. Peter accompanied the State to the door, she said to him, "There is one question I forgot to ask your Holiness. In the case of two people having married, and having been separated, are they forbidden under any circumstances to marry again?"

"It rejoices my soul," replied St. Peter, "to see your Majesty eager to inform yourself on a question of civil administration of such moment; one, too, which more than any other has occasioned such unhappy differences between the Church and the State. It is possible for a man and woman to have gone through a certain ceremony, and to have received the sacrament under circumstances which make it void from the beginning; but in the case of a valid marriage, it is not in my power to grant a divorce under any circumstances that can be named."

The State bit her lip, and was about to answer, but St. Peter, without permitting her to interrupt him, continued, "It is not I that made the law, for you know when the Pharisees put the question to our Lord, He replied, 'Moses permitted a man to put away his wife on account of the hardness of your hearts, but it was *not so from the beginning.*' Christ Himself forbids divorce. I, therefore, who am His vicar upon earth, am obliged to forbid it."

The State made no reply, but silently withdrew. St.

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Peter motioned Father Eel to accompany her through the adjoining hall.

As he approached her Majesty, she said to him, in a confiding tone, "But what are two beings who are unhappily married to do? It seems cruel not to divorce them, and looks like condemning them to a life of woe."

The Jesuit raised his brows and smiled archly, as he replied, "If your Majesty saw a frog leap into a well, and it was impossible to get him out, would you weep over him?"

"I should pity him," thoughtfully answered the State, "but I do not think that his condition would break my heart, for if he is down there it is his own fault."

"You are right, ma'am, for he had no business to jump in, he should have kept out; so if people will tie themselves together so that no one on earth can get them apart, they must be resigned to wait until the scythe of time cuts the inextricable knot, and knowing that fact, they should be a little more wary about tying themselves up."

Her Majesty had now reached her carriage. The Jesuit made her a most obsequious bow, as the State, with an affected smile, said, "*Au revoir.*"

CHAPTER VI.

The main thoroughfares of the Eternal City were crowded with people who had been impatiently awaiting the return of her Majesty and the cock. When at last he was seen coming limping down the steps, he was not at first recognized by those who had bet on him. They

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mistook him for some crippled old hen, and thought it a trick that some Papalin Swiss was trying to play off on them, in order to frighten them out of their wits. But when they chanced to spy his feet, and saw two big spurs sticking out, many turned pale, while their hearts began to quail, lest it should be the cock they had bet on. A crowd of ragamuffins, as soon as they got a peep at him, recognized him at once; their hopes could not deceive them, because they had had nothing to bet on him.

One of them sounded the tocsin by screaming out at the top of his voice, "The Jesuit has been giving the cock a lesson."

"Yes," shouted back a *gamin*, "he has been teaching him to walk like St. Ignatius."

"You will need this crutch to lean on, you scraggy, limping fowl," vociferated an old woman, as she threw a broom at him.

"Here's a steel comb that you can wear as a crest," cried out a loser, as he threw a saw at him.

"And here's a long comb to smooth down your feathers," cried a farmer, as he threw a rake at him.

"Here's Cleopatra's needle to sew up your wounds," ejaculated a man, as he flung a piece of granite.

"And here's a nice cushion to stick the needle in when you are through with it," screamed out a mason, dashing a brick at him.

No crowing could be heard, and not a cockade could be seen. One boy was trying to throw his cockade in the Tiber unobserved, when a distinguished looking man caught him in the act, and said to him,

"You had better put it in your pocket, boy, for you may need it before the day is over."

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"Not I," he cried back; "that is the last of the cock, for he has been kicked out, and the State has gone over."

"Is it not the same cock," inquired the gentleman, "that passed by this morning amidst the *vivas* and salutations of the throng?"

"Oh yes, oh yes," spoke up a sporting man; "but that was a long time ago. Don't you see that he has lost his position now, and his tail, and his comb, and he has a broken leg, too, and can hardly hobble over the stones?"

"Very good reasons," said the gentleman, "to let him alone."

"What business had he to let the cardinals pluck him?" some of them cried.

"And what was the grand chancellor doing that he did not secure the feathers?" screamed another.

"A grave piece of negligence he will have to answer for one day," the gentleman replied.

Those words escaped the minister, whose face was so terribly disfigured that he was groping his way through the crowd unrecognized by all save the gentlemanly looking man, who was Mr. Merrystein, the liberal aspirant for the ministry, Lord Halsfelt's rival. He foresaw the course events would take, and had shielded the cock from the broom, the saw, the piece of granite, and the rake. When Lord Halsfelt espied him risking his life to protect the cock, he supposed that he had been betting heavily. Mr. Merrystein, however, had not bet a farthing, but he was determined to make a bold stroke to increase his popularity with her Majesty, believing that it would help to pave his way to the ministry.

The people had quite forgotten the State, they were

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so intent upon taking revenge on the cock as the cause of their losses.

Suddenly her Majesty appears, surrounded by her mounted escort, which was halting here and there, gazing in every quarter with marked anxiety depicted on their faces, while with blanched lips and trembling voices they inquired if any one had seen the cock, and if he were alive or dead.

Everybody tried to speak at once, each making an effort to be heard above the rest. Some cried out, "We thought he was dead, that he had been kicked out." Others exclaimed, "We thought her Majesty had gone over." But those weird words, *was dead*, were heard above the rest, and part of the escort, instantly dismounting, were going to throw themselves, like Saul, backwards on their swords, when they were saved by a boy crying out at the top of his voice, "The cock is still alive! he has just passed by."

"A thousand pounds reward," they cried, "to the man who shall bring him to her Majesty alive."

When the royal cortège appeared every eye was drawn towards it, and as the people flocked together to get a glimpse of the State, the minister drew back to avoid being crushed. Mr. Merrystein then stepped forward and picked up the cock, which he thrust in his bosom and covered with his coat. He had hardly got him out of sight when the reward was offered, and the crowd rushed towards the spot where they had last seen the cock, thinking all they had to do was to turn round and pick him up. The noise and confusion was now so great that the cock's cries to get away from Mr. Merrystein could not be heard, while his captor, to drown them completely,

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began crowing as he bent nearly to the ground as though he were trying to find him. In this manner he made his way to the royal carriage, which, once reached, he ventured to hold himself erect as he cried out, "Let the nation rejoice, for the cock is still alive. My bosom burns with delight that providence should have singled me out to render my country this service." Saying which he took the cock from his bosom, and after holding him up so that they could all behold him, he placed him in the carriage by the side of her Majesty.

The radicals instantly tore off their coat tails, the conservatives tucked theirs up, whilst the liberals turned their coats, and wore them inside out, and those who had old linings to them were considered lucky, for they appeared as if they were dressed in rumpled feathers, which gave them a cocky larky air; and no one now could be seen walking straight, for every one was limping. Those who had bald heads took off their hats, whilst those who had hair on the top of their heads pulled it out by the roots, to resemble a cock without a crest; and cockades now could everywhere be seen, and nearly everybody again was crowing.

The moment the minister heard the crowing, and saw the cockades reappearing, and the people limping and pulling out their hair, he knew that the cock was not dead yet, and he gave a deep groan.

Meanwhile the cock was looking very grave. They all thought it a proof of his understanding to assume such an air of dignity and quiet reserve, while sitting beside her Majesty. But alas, poor cock! in spite of the sudden turn of fortune in his favour, he could not forget that he had a sore head, a broken leg, and that he had lost his tail.

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As soon as the State reached her palace she requested her minister, who had now joined her, to despatch a messenger as quickly as possible for several fowl doctors, if there were any such to be had.

"*Foul* doctors!" exclaimed the minister; "there will be no difficulty in procuring any amount of them, for the country is full of them."

"Really," said her Majesty, a little surprised; "there is a chance, then, of curing him."

The minister made no reply, but readily obeyed her Majesty's behests, and sent for several doctors, thinking it the easiest and quickest way of getting rid of the cock.

CHAPTER VII.

The following morning, whilst her Majesty was conversing with her minister upon the occurrences of the preceding day, five doctors were ushered into her presence, followed by Mr. Merrystein, who had requested the privilege of being present at the operation of setting the cock's leg. Her Majesty motioned the doctors to attend to their patient without delay, and remarked that she feared that he must be in pain. The doctors, after scanning the minister's face, threw a hasty glance at the cock, who was crouched upon a sofa, and without approaching him, one of them observed, "He is not in pain, we can tell by the way he opens and closes his left eye."

Mr. Merrystein was incredulous, and proposed that they should give him a dose of soothing syrup; but the doctors disapproved, saying that it might affect his brain.

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"I thought," rejoined Lord Halsfelt, "that it was given to children every day."

"Very true," replied the head physician, "but we find that these soothing syrups weaken their constitutions, and frequently make idiots of them, and we do not wish to risk giving a dose of it to a cock."

Mr. Merrystein nodded in token of approbation. The minister arose to retire, when her Majesty said to him, "I desire to see that Irishman, the fowl-feather-counter, as I must know how many feathers are missing."

"What!" gasped the minister, with horror, "have the cock's feathers to be counted over?"

"How can we tell how many to ask for," said her Majesty, "when we make our demands, unless we know how many are gone?"

The minister contracted his brow as he descended the stairs; he saw in all this a fresh embroglio.

When the minister left, the doctors approached their patient, whom they carried, despite his screams, into the centre of the apartment, and laid him on a table. It required a great deal of skill and considerable tact before they could make him lie down on his back, and it then took three doctors to keep him in that position, while the head doctor, who was a surgeon, took hold of his sound leg to feel his pulse, which after a pause he pronounced strong enough. Mr. Merrystein raised his brows upon hearing these words, and the doctor proceeded to set his leg. After he had finished the operation, the others called it a great success. But while they were congratulating him upon his dexterity, the cock gave a twitch and jerked it out of place. After an awkward pause he set it again. This time he bandaged it tightly, but he no sooner let it

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go than the cock gave another jerk and displaced it. The doctor persevered; he was determined to succeed, and he set it again and again, but the instant he let go the cock managed to unset it.

Mr. Merrystein the while confused the doctors terribly, for they had heard him remark to her Majesty that he doubted their ability in fowl surgery, for they did not even know where the cock's pulse lay, because the head doctor, instead of putting his hand on his wing, had only felt his leg.

At length the head doctor threw a glance at Mr. Merrystein as if he would like to saw him up, as he turned to her Majesty, and said, very demurely, "I can set his leg, ma'am, but it is not in the power of science to keep him still long enough for it to grow together again."

"I should give him chloroform," suggested Mr. Merrystein.

"No, no," broke in the doctors, "it would be risking too much to give it to *him*. People are dying every day, not so much from their wounds as from the administration of anæsthetics."

They gave up his leg, and tried to mend his comb, but that precious substance had been stepped upon, and was pronounced worthless. After holding a consultation they concluded that it would be better to let his head alone, lest any extra irritation should cause cerebral congestion.

"As for his tail," said the head doctor, "if you will bring me the feathers I will stitch them together, and sew them on to him, so that they will set up on his back like a fashionable aigrette on a lady's head."

"Alas!" replied her Majesty, "his tail will probably have time to grow again before we are able to get his

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feathers; they were seized by the cardinals the moment they were pulled out, and we shall doubtless have to go to war before we can recover them."

"But can you not suggest something that will make his tail grow quickly?" inquired Mr. Merrystein, with an air of anxiety.

"Nothing more," replied the surgeon, "than to give him hot hip baths frequently. He will require a trained nurse to hold him, and you must tell her to be careful and not let the heat go to his head, which must be kept cool."

"And his leg," interrupted her Majesty, "what temperature should that be?"

"Moderate," answered the great surgeon, gravely; "a trained nurse will know what to do, for the thermometer will be her guide. At his head the mercury should be very low, at his tail very high, and at his leg his temperature should be between the two extremes."

"But can you not devise anything that will keep his leg still long enough for it to grow together again?" asked Mr. Merrystein, with a look of deep concern, "for it will grieve me beyond anything I can express to see him obliged to hobble about on one leg."

"There is nothing on earth," replied the surgeon, "that can keep him still; but if I were her Majesty, I should throw him away and get a whole one."

The State and Mr. Merrystein were so startled at this inhuman proposal that they could not conceal their indignation.

"What!" burst forth Mr. Merrystein, "would you treat this valiant cock as we do our old wounded soldiers,—let him retire on tough meat and sour bread, and give his fine berth to a young one? His wounds are an honour to

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him. I respect him more with his sore head, his broken leg, and his scattered tail, than I do those heroes who return from the battle without scars or scratches."

"As you like him, keep him, then," retorted the doctor, shrugging his shoulders; "but I should much prefer a sound one, though the broken down one be ever so brave."

"I fear," said Mr. Merrystein, in an undertone to her Majesty, "if this man represents the faculty, that they have very little sentiment or gratitude, and must be entirely devoid of feeling."

"I think you can also add," said the State, "that there is very little religion amongst them either, and a great deal of scepticism and infidelity."

"If there were not a strong *esprit de corps* among them," resumed Mr. Merrystein, "I fear there would be a new book of revelations every day."

Mr. Merrystein then took leave of the State, but not without expressing an earnest wish that the cock might be made whole, so that public confidence might again be restored.

Her Majesty was now obliged to dismiss the doctors, as her minister had sent a message that he desired to see her on urgent business.

As Lord Halsfelt entered the hall he caught a glimpse of the cock hobbling across the floor. He instantly started back as he put his hand to his head, like a man that was struck with a sudden conviction that calamities would never cease. "What!" at length he exclaimed, as soon as he could recover himself, "*five doctors, and not dead yet!*" Lord Halsfelt was not an enthusiast; if he had been he would have pronounced this a miracle, and would have been converted to the belief in the cock's

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supremacy. But he was slow to form his opinions, and slower still to change them. Yet there was something in the cock's power of endurance that bordered so closely on the miraculous, that he began to waver, and to inquire within himself if there was not, after all, something in it. It set him seriously thinking, and he resolved to study the Bible thoroughly before he offered any further opposition to those who believed in the cock's omnipotence. He was about to inquire of her Majesty more explicitly in regard to the origin of the belief in him, when her Majesty interrupted him by asking, "Have you seen the Irishman?"

"No," answered the minister, gravely; "but I have his address. Supposing, however, that the cock must be dead, I did not send for him."

"Dead or alive," replied the State, "the feathers must be returned."

The minister drew from his pocket a card, on which was neatly engraved, "Hon. Patrick O'Finnegan, Ireland's Representative; Fowl-feather-counter to the Right Rev. Scribe of the most holy Cock of her R. R. M. the State. Residence, German Ambassador to the Holy See."

CHAPTER VIII.

"Five doctors, and not dead yet!" soliloquized the minister, as he sat in his office waiting for the Irishman to bring in his report.

Seven days had elapsed since he began counting the cock's feathers again,—those on his back, for those that

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had been pulled out at the Vatican he had examined and counted one morning when he dusted his master's clothing. No one could tell how far he had got, for he had given strict orders, as he had done before, not to be disturbed excepting for meals: and he had taken precaution to draw the curtains, lock the doors, and cover the keyholes; for he said if any one should look at him while he was in the act of counting them it would put him out, and he would have to begin again.

As every one was anxious to have the matter settled, and as so much depended on the correctness of his report, he had only to give his orders and they were executed at once.

Seven days passed in this way, when one bright morning early he handed in his report, in which he gave a minute description of every feather that was gone, and made out the aggregate number of missing feathers as forty-four. When the minister threw his eyes over it he would have kicked the Irishman down-stairs if he had dared, for he regarded his statement as a brazen piece of audacity and fraud, and he considered that to make a demand upon the Holy See for the feathers, based upon such a report, was equivalent to a declaration of war. He made an urgent appeal to the State, requesting her to permit him to merely demand the feathers that had been pulled out, and that the cardinals had taken immediate possession of, without specifying the number or giving any description of them at all. The State consulted her clergy and Mr. Merrystein, and left it to them to decide for her. They considered the minister's proposition preposterous. They said the Papalins were capable of sending back feathers that had never been on the cock's back,

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that had been blessed by her Majesty's lord archbishop. The opposition was too strong, and the minister was obliged to yield, and he sent his demands to the Holy See, based upon the Irishman's report. He had no sooner placed his official seal to the despatch, and had commissioned an envoy to take it, than he sank down in his chair, and covered his face with his arms as he leaned over on a table, while such words as these occasionally escaped his lips, "Five doctors, and not dead yet!"

The minister had always hated the cock, and he had reasons for it. But Lord Halsfelt was an honest man, and he believed in giving every one his due, and he felt that as the cock had had the power of endurance to survive the efforts of five doctors, who were trying to cure him, he was entitled to some respect, and he resolved that in future he would never pass him without raising his hat.

CHAPTER IX.

When the State's envoy was announced at the Vatican, St. Peter was in council with several members of the sacred college and the German ambassador. Father Eel was shortly afterwards ushered in, looking uncombed, unwashed, and smelling like the keel of a ship. He took a seat near the ambassador, who did not try to conceal his disgust at the appearance of the new-comer, for he drew his chair slightly away from him as he scrutinized him from head to foot.

The German ambassador was a liberal German Catholic, of strong anti-Jesuit proclivities. His government,

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wishing to get rid of him, and not knowing what to do with him, and having an intense hatred of the Holy See, sent him as ambassador to the Pope. Suspended round his neck he wore the prize medal for domestic economy.

The secretary of his Holiness read aloud the minister's despatch and the Irishman's report, which Lord Halsfelt had enclosed without comment.

"They mean to force us into a war," the secretary remarked.

"Yes," answered St. Peter, thoughtfully; "for how is it possible to accede to such an unreasonable demand? And who is this Irishman who calls himself Ireland's representative? I never heard of him before."

"Probably some Orangeman," said a cardinal, "that the devil has sent down here to try us."

"No, no," interposed the Jesuit, throwing a reproachful look at the German for his parsimony, which the German dignified by the name of economy; "he represents his country; he is in a starving condition."

"Better to be that," drawled out the German, "than to look and smell as you do. What ails you?"

"Nothing," mildly answered the Jesuit, "only I was tarred and feathered on the road. That is the reason I was late. I was detained finding my clothes, and trying to get them on again."

"Really," said the German, "you took too much pains!"

These remarks escaped St. Peter, who was listening with an air of deep concern to an account their Eminences were giving of a new persecution which had befallen them. It appears it had everywhere been bruited by the press devoted to the State that the instant the cardinals caught sight of the cock on the occasion of the interview

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between the Church and State, their Eminences had lost all sense of their dignity, and in their efforts to get hold of him and stop his crowing they had nearly plucked him alive; and whenever they appeared in the street their vehicles were followed by a motley throng, who would try to cover them with feathers, while they branded them as plunderers of the State.

St. Peter had observed the feathers on their Eminences, notwithstanding their attendants had tried to brush them off in the antechamber, but as fast as they were brushed off one cardinal, they would fly on to another, or float about the apartment, even penetrating the room in which the council was held, where some of them alighted on the pontifical chair in the very face of the Pope.

"Alas!" sighed St. Peter, when they had finished the relation, "it only shows how careful we should be never to meddle ever so little with the affairs of the State."

"May it please your Holiness," one of the cardinals replied, "we never touched the cock, nor have we ever openly expressed our opinion in regard to him."

"But you all showed the deep interest that you took in the question by picking up the feathers."

"A slight offence, truly," they answered.

"Ah," replied St. Peter, "but when we are surrounded by an evil-minded populace seeking to malign us, the slightest flaw they chance to spy in you they magnify until it becomes the size of a mountain, whose darkened shadow is sure to be thrown on me." The Pontiff here paused to brush off some feathers that adhered to his sleeve.

"We did not divine her Majesty's intention when we picked up the feathers; we supposed that she had brought

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the cock here to leave it, which act we mistook for a tacit acknowledgment of her deep contrition for having carried it off."

"I admire," replied his Holiness, "that confiding and truly childlike simplicity of spirit of which your Eminences are possessed. But it is not well to indulge it too much; we should be wary in our most trivial actions, lest we scandalize the weak, or those filled with malice."

"I cannot plead the innocence of my eminent colleagues," one of them rejoined; "I do not believe that the cock belongs to the State. In seizing the feathers I felt that I was taking what justly belonged to St. Peter."

Upon hearing those words several of the cardinals burst forth, "We, too, believe that the cock belongs to St. Peter."

The Pontiff raised his hand for the cardinals to be silent, and was about to speak, when the German interposed.

"Pardon a humble Teuton," said he, "if he ventures to express an opinion on so important a matter. But I have studied the question thoroughly, and am familiar with all its labyrinthan intricacies, and it grieves me to be obliged to dispel for ever one of your most cherished delusions, that the cock belongs to you; for the cock that awoke St. Peter's conscience did not belong to St. Peter; St. Peter was not at home when he heard him crow. Neither did he belong to the State, for it was not at Cæsar's court that St. Peter heard him, but at the court of the high-priest Caiphas, in whose yard he crowed; therefore the cock belongs to the synagogue."

The earnest and determined tone with which these words were pronounced created considerable commotion among the cardinals, for they thought they saw signs of a

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triangular war to be waged by the Church, the State, and the Jews. One of them was about to express his opinion, when he was interrupted by the German, who added, "But the Jews will never go to war about him, for they know they would never be able to get him by force, as the State would exterminate every Israelite sooner than yield one pin feather of her rights over him to them. And they would only be bringing down upon themselves all the horrors through which they passed under Vespasian and Titus. Still they do not despair. They say, 'We will keep quiet so as to avoid persecution. We will let the Church and State fight it out between them, as it is evident that there will be a war of extermination before they come to any amicable agreement. After they have exterminated each other fighting over him, we Jews will step in and take quiet possession of him.'"

"I commend their prudence and their patience," said the Pontiff; "but in the end they will find that they are mistaken, for it is my policy also to be patient and to wait, hoping the scales may yet fall from the eyes of the State, and we may then be able to decide the question amicably and satisfactorily. Father Eel has accepted the task of giving the State a course of instructions, and I am desirous of seeing her under his tutelage."

All eyes were now turned upon Father Eel. The ambassador, after scanning him minutely, turned to St. Peter, and said, "I beg your Holiness will pardon me if I remind you that while you reproach their Eminences for merely touching the cock's feathers, you seem to have forgotten that that Jesuit had his whole foot on his back."

St. Peter was not pleased with the ambassador's remark, and he quickly spoke up, "Father Eel, divining her

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Majesty's motive in bringing the cock with her, rendered the Church a service when he put his foot on him and kicked him out."

"Still," urged one of the cardinals, "all the persecution falls on us."

Here the Jesuit begged permission of his Holiness to speak. The Pontiff nodded assent, and the Jesuit, turning towards the sacred college, said, "I beg your Eminences will pardon me if I differ from you, and say that all the persecution does not fall on you, for wherever a Jesuit is recognized he is assailed with a shower of cock's legs, and balls of tar with long cock tail feathers are stuck into his hair, while cock's combs all bleeding are thrown in his face, and frequently a cock's carcass filled with stones is thrown at his head, while the police look on as complacently as if it were as good fun for him as it is for them."

"Humph," said the ambassador, "that is nothing to do to a Jesuit."

"Very true," replied the Pope, "for they usually do a great deal worse; and the Jesuits, too, are accustomed to that sort of thing. But the cardinals, with their red gowns and white lace, are not fitted for such out-door freaks. They surround St. Peter's throne, and are like a halo around his head. Any dirt thrown upon them is as if it were thrown in my face." Here the Pontiff paused to brush away a feather that was alighting on his brow. "Whereas the Jesuits are to me like a pair of rough shod boots. It does not hurt them to have mud thrown upon them; they are made for rough use. But the cardinals should be kept like crystal, that reflects the rays of the sun. The Jesuits only need blacking and rubbing to

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make them shine. To prevent further hostilities we must give up the feathers."

"Holy Father," answered several of their Eminences, "we gathered them up out of consideration for her Majesty; we supposed that she must feel confused for being the cause of making the pontifical apartment appear like a roost; but we threw them away as soon as we left the room."

"Behold your reward for your complacency to royalty," said St. Peter, pointing to the feathers that were still floating about the room. "A war is inevitable unless every feather is returned."

Their Eminences looked at each other aghast, while the Pontiff leaned back in his chair and turned pale. The German ambassador pressed his hands on his pockets as he exclaimed, "Threw them away! No wonder the Church is poor!"

Father Eel meanwhile fixed his eyes upon the German with a steadfast gaze, for he had espied him on that memorable day picking up the feathers as fast as the cardinals threw them away.

When the German perceived that the Jesuit was eyeing him closely, he began fidgeting in his chair. At last he arose, for the penetrating look of the Jesuit pierced his very bones. Not a word was spoken as he began emptying his pockets. One by one the feathers appear, and are sorted out amongst a lot of strings, old corks, and rags, and are deposited on a large table in the middle of the room. The holy Father and the cardinals were about to express their gratitude for the signal service he had rendered Rome, when they were prevented by the ambassador himself, who was afraid they might suspect he had faith

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in them, and he did not wish them to believe that he was as liberal as all that.

"Your Holiness," said he, "I gathered them up from a spirit of German economy."

"Make no apologies for preserving them," said St. Peter; "your economy has proved a blessing to Rome, and I feel now like paying your country a special tribute for that one virtue alone."

"Alas! my country, holy Father," sighed the German, "is now practising that virtue more strenuously than ever, for we are one and all preparing for the rainy day which we know is forthcoming in a shower of French balls, and as the chances of war are uncertain, we are already looking forward to the day when France may reduce us to selling old bottles and rags again."

"You have nothing to fear from that source," replied the Pontiff, "while the republic lasts."

"We all know that," quickly spoke the German; "but the republic is cutting its own throat so fast that it will soon expire, and then may spring up a great empire, which is the dread phantom that is now haunting our dear old Fatherland."

"I commend your foresight," said the Pontiff, "which present events seem to justify."

The ambassador then withdrew.

St. Peter, turning to their Eminences, said, "Your reverences, we will look at the feathers, and see how they agree with the description here given."

"I am most loath to touch them," said a cardinal, "for lately I have had feathers enough."

"There is no help for it," replied St. Peter. "It is not the first time that the State has placed us in this

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position. But our dignity consists in bearing these humiliations with patience and resignation, for in these things our conscience permits us to yield to any extent, and in submitting to them, instead of betraying any weakness, we only show our strength."

After they had been counted and carefully examined they looked at each other as if they had been struck dumb, because there were just forty-four feathers, and they could not have described them more accurately, although they were lying before their eyes, than they were described in the Irishman's report.

"Well," exclaimed St. Peter, "this seems incredible. But if they attach so much importance to the feathers, what value must they place on the cock? The State certainly never intends to give him up."

"And how is it possible," inquired a cardinal, as he took a pinch of snuff, "that they can keep such an accurate account of his feathers when they are still on his back?"

"Those are mysteries," replied St. Peter, "that belong to them. I do not wish to know them, for I never intend to have such an office attached to the papal court, even though the State should give him up."

"I should hope not, I should hope not," spoke up several cardinals at once, "particularly if it were incumbent upon us to keep the count."

"Your Eminences can see," said St. Peter, "how providence watches over us. That liberal German Catholic was sent down here to torment us, and yet he rendered us a service for which we should ever feel grateful. I have often observed it, that our enemies, in trying to bring evil

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upon us, often do us more good than the combined efforts of our most faithful friends in trying to serve us."

"And that Irishman," added a cardinal, "I cannot make him out. He appears to be an honest man, yet I cannot see how his conscience permits him to hold such a position as that."

"Judge the Irishman not," said St. Peter, "for he is often obliged to accept a position he dislikes. Before we can judge him we must put ourselves in his place, and then we should find that instead of doing better we might do a great deal worse."

CHAPTER X.

The State's minister, while awaiting the pontifical reply, began whiling away the time calculating the chances of success in a war. He despatched a messenger to know how much ammunition there was in the stores. But before the messenger returned the papal envoy arrived. When he handed the feathers to the minister he requested him to give him a receipt for the same. His Holiness had not written a word.

The minister was never so confounded in his life as when he opened the envelope and saw that his demands had been acceded to, and that the Irishman's report was correct. "What must the Pontiff think of us?" he thought, as he handed the legate the receipt, without even looking him in the face. He was obliged to acknowledge, however, that there were certain things wherein the Irishman was cleverer than himself. He was amazed.

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too, that the cardinals should have preserved the feathers, and he suspected they had faith in them, and imagined in that moment that everybody had gone mad but himself. He took the feathers to her Majesty, whom he found in company with several gentlemen, among whom was Mr. Merrystein, anxiously waiting to hear the result.

"Ah," exclaimed the State, "this time we have made them lower their pretensions a little."

"St. Peter," said the minister, "is always ready to yield in non-essentials."

"I hope you do not call these non-essentials," rejoined Mr. Merrystein, raising his brows; "the majority of mankind consider the feathers the finest part of the bird."

"Because they usually are," retorted the minister; "but I consider that that cock now is worth more than his feathers, for he survived the efforts of five doctors who were trying to cure him."

"That can be accounted for on natural principles," added Mr. Merrystein; "if he is alive it is because they could do nothing for him."

"They tortured him," said her Majesty.

"Yet he survived it," replied the minister, "which does not happen in nine cases out of ten."

Mr. Merrystein thought he discovered in Lord Halsfelt's remarks a disposition to come to terms with the opposition. He was not at all pleased, for he feared he might beat him at his own little game, and he instantly sought to change the conversation by turning it on the Irishman. They all had a good word for him, and complimented him highly for the faithful manner in which he had performed his duty.

"May I make bold enough to inquire of your Majesty,"

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said Mr. Merrystein, with an air of curiosity, "what you did for the Irishman that could induce him to perform his duty so well? We could not have been more faithfully served by one of our own countrymen."

The State reflected a moment without making any reply, until one of the honourable gentlemen present asked, "Did any one bribe him?"

Then her Majesty quickly responded, "No, no one did anything of the sort; we only treated him kindly, as though he were one of the family."

Her Majesty's reply startled them all, and they stared at each other in mutual surprise.

After a short pause the minister remarked, "I think if that is the case, it would be a capital policy to carry out with them all, and when they ask us for bread, not to send them hot balls, which don't seem to agree with them; perhaps they are the cause that they are constantly breaking out."

"Yes," interrupted one of the honourable gentlemen, who had once studied medicine; "those hot balls evidently breed a distemper that is not so easily cured, particularly since the physicians refuse to apply the proper remedies. Instead of soaking off their bandages, they aggravate their wounds by tearing them off; and then, instead of pouring oil on their sores, they rub in red pepper, vinegar, and salt, which frequently throw the patient into convulsions; and while he is kicking and writhing with pain, if any one happens to get hurt, they scream out 'Murder!' and hang the patient on the spot, unless he is strong enough to get away. The physicians then hold a consultation, and conclude that hanging is the only effectual remedy for all their ailments."

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"That treatment must be changed," indignantly exclaimed the State, as she turned livid with rage. "It is really a disgrace to us, who were so active in bringing about the emancipation act in the United States, to have some of our people in a worse condition than were even the slaves."

"Yes," put in Mr. Merrystein, "it must be changed."

The minister was here heard to say, softly, "It should long ere this have been changed."

"It is useless lamenting over the past," said the State; "it is never too late to mend, and I am sure that when we have treated them as we would like to be treated ourselves, that in a short while everything will be going on well."

The company were then about to disperse, when the thought occurred to the State that as head of her Church she should count the feathers herself. "You can see," she exclaimed, after she had finished, "how very necessary it is that I should examine these things myself, for had I not done so an error this time would have crept in; *there is one feather missing.*"

The minister here arose and counted them again, but alas! his first count and his second did not agree, for, instead of forty-four, there were now only forty-three. After a moment's reflection he burst forth, "What does one feather amount to, after all?"

"One feather amount to!" exclaimed the State, "why, even St. Peter would tell you that when it regards a matter of faith, a feather has the weight of a planet. They must give it up, or we will raze the Vatican. We must show them that we are as nice as themselves in

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matters pertaining to doctrine, or they will have the most sovereign contempt for us."

Mr. Merrystein suspected that the minister had never received it, and the minister was confident that Mr. Merrystein, to embroil matters, had taken it. They began conversing together in a low and confidential manner, when lo! the feather was seen floating between them. They no sooner espied it than they separated, as if a bomb shell had fallen between them.

The minister approached the State, and said to her in an undertone, "I always believed Mr. Merrystein to be an honest man, and never supposed that he was capable of stooping to such pilfering, but I have no more respect for him now than I have for a common thief."

"It was floating between you," said her Majesty, as she threw upon him a glance which he readily understood.

"I suppose, then," spoke up the minister, "that I am suspected of having taken it?"

"It still lies between you," answered the State, curtly, as she glanced at the feather now lying on the floor.

They were here interrupted by a chamberlain, who brought a despatch from St. Peter, requesting the State to be good enough to appoint a time when she could go and receive instruction from Father Eel.

"That reminds me," said her Majesty, "that St. Peter told me that that Jesuit was a skilful surgeon. I shall take the cock with me, and as he broke his leg I will make him mend it, before I ever let him come near my eyes with any sharp instruments."

"I think it is the best thing that your Majesty can do," observed Mr. Merrystein, who knew that he was not to

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accompany the State, and that it would not be incumbent upon him to see that the cock came home safe.

The State and her minister then withdrew. The company retired into one of the antechambers, where they lingered to talk about the feather, and to decide what capital could be made out of it in the forthcoming election. They had not conversed long when the minister appeared, looking very grave, and as if buried in thought. He passed them as if unconscious of their presence, while their eyes followed him as he leisurely sauntered down the spacious hall, where he chanced to meet the cock. He no sooner caught sight of him than he instantly stopped, and made a profound bow as he raised his hat.

"There!" cried Mr. Merrystein, as the door closed on Lord Halsfelt's form, "did I not always say that he was another Tallyrand, who considered that words were only intended to conceal a man's thoughts? He pretends to have no faith in the cock, when it is evident that he has as much faith in him as her Majesty's lord archbishop."

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CHAPTER XI.

PART II.

The few Jesuit fathers that were still in Rome were pursuing their usual daily round at the Gesù, on the morning that the State was to go there to be instructed.

The State thought it prudent to conceal her visits to the college as much as possible from the people, lest amidst boisterous demonstrations of loyalty a stray ball, sent by a skilful hand, might change her existence, a sentiment experienced by all crowned heads of that period. She covered her face with a thick veil, and left her palace by a private staircase. Over her stately form was thrown a long mantle, under which she concealed the cock, which she held tightly pressed to her bosom.

The Jesuit received her with gracious deference, which the State returned by addressing him with great sprightliness and cordiality.

"St. Peter," she said, "has recommended you highly as a surgeon; he told me that you could perform with skill the most delicate operations, and I have brought the cock with me to be treated."

"I beg your Majesty will be seated," replied the Jesuit, as he made a profound bow.

The cock at that instant broke away from her Majesty

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and perched on a chair, where he began shaking his wings and stretching his neck, as if he were preparing for a fight, in spite of his wounds. The Jesuit heeded him not, but he no sooner took his seat, and was about to begin the instruction, than the cock flew on the table, upsetting the ink, and began to paddle in it as if he were trying to wash his feet: and then, with both claws dripping, and the broken leg thoroughly blacked, he picked up a pen as if it had been a worm, and flew down on the floor, leaving black traces wherever he went. The State paid no attention to him, trying to affect a most holy unconcern. The clock was about to strike twelve, and the cock made a motion as if he were going to fly on the top of it, when the Jesuit instantly arose and drove him in a corner, where he gave him with his discipline, keeping time with the clock, twelve heavy strokes. He did it with so much method, decision, and precision, that the State could not realize what was going on behind her until she turned her head, and saw the cock looking frightened to death, and crouching up in the corner. She uttered a feeble shriek, and threw herself back in her chair as if she were going to faint. The Jesuit rushed towards her, and inquired, in a most solicitous tone, "Did the clock striking frighten your Majesty? I'll stop it if you wish."

"The clock striking frighten me!" echoed the State, angrily. "No, no; and you know well enough what ails me. It was your striking the cock so."

"Madam," replied the Jesuit, in the blandest of tones, "you told me that you had brought him here to be treated, and I thought that his leg needed strapping."

He then sat down beside her with as much composure as if his treatment had delighted her.

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She would instantly have left the college had she not recalled her minister's counsels. She decided to defer her revenge, and she asked the Jesuit to begin; but she was determined to harass and provoke him as much as she could.

The Jesuit knew what was passing in her mind, and he was determined not to begin until she was in a humour to listen to him. He felt that he had done his duty, and did not care then if the world came to an end.

The State was astute enough to see that, in order to force him to do what he did not wish, she would have first to hang, draw, and quarter him, and she would only have then a corpse on her hands she would not know what to do with. All this time her eyes were fixed on the cock, which was still huddled up in the corner, looking as if he dared not move. The Jesuit was watching her, and knew that he could assert no control over her until he diverted her attention from her pet.

"Would, ma'am," at length he said to her, in a beseeching tone, "that I could fix your thoughts on something else."

The State slowly moved her head with a nonchalant air, her eyes partly closed. She thought that would vex him more than if they were shut. She then waited for him to speak. But he folded his arms and contracted his brows, as if he too were in a pet, and was going to wait until she spoke first. This posture of affairs lasted until the State, growing weary, and happening unintentionally to open her eyes wide, instantly started as if she saw an apparition. Before her was a curtain. As soon as she could recover from her surprise she arose and rushed towards it, and would fain have rent it, but that curtain

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in her hands was as immoveable as a wall. Her curiosity was now thoroughly aroused, and she begged the Jesuit to raise it.

"I am most anxious to do so," he replied, "but your mind must be calm to view what is behind it, for it conceals our interior life in the supernatural world."

Her face was now aglow, for she longed to take a peep into that world that had always been concealed from her; yet even amidst her longings was mingled a secret dread that it might all be a delusion, and that if that curtain ever arose she would behold nothing but some stale inscription on the wall reproaching her for her crimes and levities. After a long pause she begged of him to show her St. Peter's Bark, if he has any. "I sometimes doubt," she added, "that he ever had so much as a shell to row in."

"Madam," quickly answered the Jesuit, "how could you forget that St. Peter had a Bark, when it is one of the most exquisitely beautiful ships that was ever launched on troubled waters?" As the Jesuit pronounced these words his face was lit with a peaceful smile, as if the very thought of that ship enamoured his soul. "Would that I could show it to you," said he, "as God created it." He then prayed that God would grant him that grace.

The prayer had hardly passed his lips when two angels came and raised the curtain. They were the guardian angels of both. The Jesuit recognized his, but the State had for many years been going so fast that her guardian angel had not been able to keep up with her, and she had thus quite forgotten it; but she no sooner caught sight of it again than she was transfixed by its celestial beauty, and became oblivious of everything else. The Jesuit had

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to remind her that the curtain was raised. Slowly and reluctantly she withdrew her gaze from the angel, and looked directly before her. A shade of disappointment passed over her features, for she beheld nothing but a blue mist, which appeared to be rising from a placid lake. She was about to fix her eyes again on the angel spirit, believing that that mist was all she could ever behold in the supernatural world, when she observed incense rising from the lake, that was gradually chasing the mist away, and the angels, too, were fanning it with their wings. The State asked the father what the incense meant.

"It is the prayers of the saints," he replied, "which are being offered for you."

A sense of gratitude then took possession of her soul, and with that incense of prayer she mingled her own, when instantly, like the lightning's flash, the sun shone forth and consumed the mist, and before her enraptured gaze, which was now thoroughly transfixed, surrounded by a halo of glory, stood St. Peter's ship.

The State for a moment was struck speechless with wonder and admiration. At length, stretching forth her hand, and laying it on the Jesuit's arm, her eyes still riveted on St. Peter's Bark, with a trembling voice she asked him, "Will it ever pass away?"

The Jesuit, in firm and ringing accents, answered, "Never! the universe and all its planets may pass away, but St. Peter's Bark will live for ever."

The State heaved a sigh of relief, and clasped her hands as if in token of thanks to its Creator, while the Jesuit continued, "The world and its delusions revolve around it, and they may come again betwixt you and it,

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and you may say, 'It was only a dream, only a vision, that I once beheld.' But by prayer you can thrust the world and its delusions away, and then the reality will appear to you again, as you now behold it, for it knows no change. It is built and rests on the Eternal Rock, the hand of God. Do you not see how it nestles in His palm?"

"I can see it distinctly," replied the State, "but I understand it not, and I wish that you would explain it to me, so that if ever the memory of this sight should fail me, your words will have impressed it upon my heart."

"It has been the study of my life," answered the Jesuit, "to learn its mysteries, and to teach them. Still, when you ask me to explain them to you, that by my words you may recall that Bark in all its beauty as you now behold it, I feel myself unequal to the task; for no language can express its worth, or describe its beauty; no pencil can trace it, or brush portray it. I can simply explain it to you as we have been taught to do by St. Peter."

The State was all attention, while the Jesuit began:

"The materials of which this mystical Bark is made existed from all eternity. You perceive that its shape is that of a heart, yet two hearts are there so closely united that they resemble one. These two hearts form the ship's hull. It rests in the palm of the right hand of God, as a dove would nestle in the bosom of its mate, with a gentle tremor, for in the bottom of the ship lies the FEAR OF THE LORD.* The deck is made of HUMILITY,

* The words printed in small capitals are the names of the materials of which St. Peter's Bark is made, or designate something that belongs to it.

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immensely thick planks, but very slippery, having been planed and polished by the kicks and blows of the world, and tempered by its own inherent qualities, MILDNESS and SWEETNESS.

"St. Peter's Bark has but one mast, which is WISDOM. To this mast are attached three triangular sails, known as FAITH, HOPE, and CHARITY. The sails have very thick borders, that are made of UNDERSTANDING, and the sails of FAITH and HOPE are fastened by their borders slightly aft, by two strong clamps shaped like hands, attached to either side of the ship. These clamps are SCIENCE or KNOWLEDGE; in the centre of each of them is an aperture that glows like a lamp; it is by that light that we perceive what is passing in the world.

"As the ship is upward bound, and should never stop, the anchor is never cast, but lies flat upon the deck. Its two arms, resting on those curves at the stern, represent MERCY. Its shank is JUSTICE, and shoots through WISDOM's mast, which keeps it steady and holds it fast, while its end projects fore, and forms the prow of the ship, where the end of CHARITY's sail is attached to its ring; the emblem of ETERNITY.

"You thus perceive that the point of JUSTICE is blunted by the hands of MERCY, that appear to be melted upon it, and that the arms of MERCY taper at the top, and are tipped with two triangular butts. These butts are MORAL SENSE.

"The anchor's stock is HUMAN PRUDENCE. The two round butts at each end of it represent COMMON SENSE. You observe that this stock of HUMAN PRUDENCE does not rest on the hull of the ship, but only touches it. In the centre of the stock hangs a lantern, which is known

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as REASON; its wick is INCLINATION, and is fed by the essence of VITALITY.

"The anchor's shaft makes a comfortable bench, and a very steady seat, the only one to be found on the ship.

"The anchor's rope is LONGANIMITY, and is wound around the binnacle, the pillar of MORTIFICATION, and is fastened to the cross, which you see lying off there beyond the helm. On the top of the binnacle a dial is placed. It is there we get a good look at TIME, for in no other place does it pass so slowly. But if it appears to lag too long behind, by lashing it a bit with the anchor's rope, we can make it jog along more quickly. To stand on the deck of St. Peter's Bark we are obliged to hold on to the anchor's rope, or cling to the mast, or to one of the sails, for unless we do, before we know it we are off and afloat, except we choose to be tied to the mast by the cords of OBEDIENCE, that are very strong threads, though quite invisible, and can only be broken by our will. These threads give the best and surest support, because they emanate from the mast itself, and by an act of our will we can rivet them to our hearts, making them there as fast as they are to the mast.

"To repose ourselves, we can rest our back against the mast, or lean, if we choose, on the anchor's arms at the stern of the Bark, which is the only railing on the ship, and is close to the helm, for at the stern of the Bark, where the anchor's arms curve and meet, close to the end of the anchor's shank, is St. Peter's seat. It is there that he guides his Bark. The wheel at the helm is PERSEVERANCE; its nave is FIDELITY, and its spokes are made of CONSTANCY. It runs on the pivot of PATIENCE, which is its axletree, and is turned by placing our hands on the spokes

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that pierce through the felloe, because PERSEVERANCE is only attained by repeated acts of CONSTANCY. The rudder is FORTITUDE, the tiller is SUPERNATURAL PRUDENCE, and St. Peter's compass is the gift of COUNSEL. You can see that the tiller shoots up through the shank of JUSTICE, where it is held by the hand of MERCY."

The State at that instant caught sight of a stick, and she inquired of the Jesuit, "Is that St. Peter's cane?"

"No," replied the Father; "that straight stick is ORDER, and is his RULE. He would soon get tired leaning on that, and he might break it, too; but holding on to the anchor's rope prevents that weariness and fatigue caused by the expectation of some hoped-for good. On that little block you see over there St. Peter rests his feet. It is FIRMNESS, and is a brick."

"But what is that?" asked the State, pointing to a coat of mail. "St. Peter is certainly no soldier."

"Indeed, ma'am," said the Jesuit, "he is the best of generals: and what you see over there is his armour, PRAYER, and his sword is the WORD OF GOD."

"But how can St. Peter see to guide the Bark so far from the lantern?" inquired the State; "it appears to be quite out of sight."

"That you will readily understand," replied the Jesuit, "after I have explained to you how this mystical ship is lighted. Do you see that Dove reposing on the top of the mast, whose body emits those dazzling rays? That dove is the HOLY SPIRIT, and is to the ship what the sun is to the earth. It is its best and purest light, and its rays are concentrated by the prism of CERTITUDE, the apex of WISDOM, which thus absorbs them, and communicates them to other parts of the ship. Then comes the

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light from the UNDERSTANDING, those deep thick borders on the sails, which is a light that enables us to penetrate those obscure truths which FAITH proposes. This light shines forth like innumerable jets of gas, and they appear on the sails as if their borders were studded with gems. Those gems represent TEMPERANCE. With this light from the UNDERSTANDING the mind conceives a true idea of ETERNITY, and of everything that has reference thereto.

"The lights that come next are those given by SCIENCE or KNOWLEDGE, those two clamps to which the sails of FAITH and HOPE are tacked; they serve as lamps, and enable us to view what is passing in the outer world.

"The anchor is made of the finest steel, and those innumerable lights you see sparkling around it, like flashes from the firefly's wings, are sparks that fly from the anchor when struck by ejaculatory prayers, which ascend to Heaven like orient pearls, and descending, fall on the anchor and cause those sparks that in the distance twinkle like stars, and enable us to distinguish the anchor when leagues away. They are one of the attractions on the Bark.

"The lantern REASON, when it has been properly trimmed, gives a very good light, and it helps us to grope our way on a very dark night. We never put it up, however, in the place of the sun, moon, and stars. We leave the scientists to put it there to see by.

"There is also a strong light emitted from those two triangular butts of MORAL SENSE that tip the arms of MERCY, and a most excellent and steady light, too, shines from the round butts of COMMON SENSE that cap the ends of HUMAN PRUDENCE. But the butts of MORAL SENSE receive their light more directly from the Dove, while

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those of COMMON SENSE get most of their light from the lantern.

"Does your Majesty perceive those flames oozing out of the stern under the anchor's arms, where they envelope a cross that appears to be proof against the fire? Those flames are devotion; they are kindled by CHARITY, in the centre of the hull of the Bark; it is by that fire the ship is heated."

"CHARITY!" repeated the State; "I thought CHARITY was a sail."

"It is," replied the Jesuit, "but it is also a fruit of the Holy Spirit, and it is of that fruit that the fire in the hull of the Bark is made. It is kindled by the rays that shine from above, and the deck being made of a material especially adapted to attract them, if the deck is cleared they penetrate into the very heart of the ship, and kindle a fire, if the materials are there and have been properly prepared; and thence proceed those flames that encircle that cross, which serves as a bar to stir them up, and keep them ablaze, or they might go out.

"The cross is the most useful article on board. It is the ship's ballast, and keeps it poised, and it is also the lever by which the ship is raised. It is a life preserver, too, the strongest and safest that has ever yet been made; so long as life lasts it lasts; any one will be its guarantee for that. It is also the gang plank of the ship; it is placed at the helm, near St. Peter; to get on board you have to pass over it, and recognize him."

"I should think," observed the State, "that the HOLY SPIRIT sending forth such effulgent rays, would make sufficient warmth, and that the heat would be too intense when CHARITY's furnace was ablaze."

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"What would become of us," replied the Jesuit, "when those rays are withdrawn, and we find ourselves in those long bleak spiritual nights? The other lights would only be like candles to keep us warm. St. Peter's Bark is surrounded by the world's cold waves, that beat heavily against it, and the water surging high frequently passes over it. But it cannot quench CHARITY's flames; without that fire we would soon be chilled."

"But tell me," interrupted the State, "something about the texture of the sails."

"The sail of FAITH," answered the Jesuit, "is like dark blue crape, and sometimes in rough weather becomes quite opaque. HOPE's sail is of thinner material still, a kind of gauze, tinted with the rainbow's hues, which in a great storm, when FAITH shrinks up, you would think it was made of foam, so easily is it scattered by the wind. CHARITY's sail is made of more durable stuff; it never wears out, and it never fades; yet if you examine it closely you would think that it was made of lace, it is so easily slashed. CHARITY's sail is also doubled, and is attached to the mast like a pair of wings, that can be spread out, and wrapped around the mast and the other sails like a lustrous mantle."

The State's attention was now attracted by a looking glass. "What," she exclaimed, pointing to it, "a piece of vanity!"

"Not at all," spoke up the Jesuit; "it is a very useful piece of furniture. That is MODESTY, our mirror. We take a good look in it at ourselves, and arrange all our movements, our actions, and our words, so as to appear well in the presence of God. We see in it everything that passes within ourselves as clearly as we discern objects in

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the noontide sun. It is not, however, a French plate, but it has a very frail frame. It is fastened to the mast, as it is less likely there to tumble down and break."

"I should like to take a look at myself in that glass," said the State. And she arose as if to approach it.

"Not yet, ma'am," the Jesuit replied, "as you might find your features in it a little distorted, and say that there were flaws in it, whilst I would insist that it was the truest glass in the world."

"Ah," musingly inquired the State, "are, then, you Jesuits disputatious?"

The Jesuit closed his eyes, and with a nervous movement of the hand, observed, "Madam, we are losing time, we are digressing. I will continue the description. Do you not observe that ethereal blue vapour that surrounds the Bark, like the mist that is often seen hovering around a mountain's peak, or suspended over a glen like an ethereal veil? That mist is PIETY; its delicious moisture permeates the sails, and prevents them getting hard and crisp. That mystical belt, too, which you see encircling the mast at the top of the sails, like an enchanted wreath whose flowers are concealed, but whose delicious fragrance is distinctly felt, for it steals upon the senses without lulling them to sleep, but fuses into them aspirations for higher and nobler things; that is CHASTITY: it is a girdle of beauty and strength, and belongs to the ship. It is the prize belt that her valour has won."

Their attention was now diverted by a lambkin springing up, and skipping over the deck, with a wreath of wild flowers entwined around its neck. It was attached by a silken cord to an olive branch that grew sheltered by the

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mast, and from the warmth it received from CHARITY'S fire.

"Oh!" exclaimed the Jesuit, his face lighting up as soon as he caught sight of it, "that is JOY, the pet on the Bark. It springs from the possession of God. PEACE is the olive branch to which it is tied. It has to be attached to that to keep it on board.

"Where CHARITY is burning, PEACE is sure to thrive, and JOY can always be found there to sport about. Without CHARITY'S fire the olive branch would wither and die, and would be broken by the first adverse gale. JOY then would be let loose, and would soon be swept overboard by the winds, and swallowed up by the waves.

"That wreath encircling the Bark, and reaching over the tops of the sails, is the rigging of the ship. It is a crown of thorns, and we are obliged to mount it whenever we adjust the sails."

"I see no thorns," said the State.

"Your Majesty does not perceive them because they are interlaced with a wreath of roses, the crown of Mary. Those roses, as if imbued with life, adjust themselves around the thorns, so that if they pierce our feet, the roses exhale a balm that soothes our wounds."

"Oh!" exclaimed the State, as if breathless with impatience for the Jesuit to cease, that she might speak, "I find that crown of thorns for a rigging in most shocking bad taste."

"The crown of thorns, ma'am," replied the Jesuit, "is not one of the gifts of the Holy Ghost, but one of the gifts of the State."

"I cannot remember," said her Majesty, "that the State ever made you such a present."

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"Try and recollect," said the Jesuit.

"Indeed," returned her Majesty, "it was not the State, but the Jews that gave it."

"I beg to differ with your Majesty; but the Jews refused to put their foot into the prætorium that day, for fear of being defiled."

"Yes," retorted the State, "while it did not cost them anything to shed innocent blood."

"Nevertheless," said the Jesuit, "the crown of thorns was made and given by Pilate's soldiers; Cæsar was responsible."

"Never mind," interrupted the State; "Cæsar was a pagan, and is dead; you should have buried the crown of thorns with him."

The Jesuit gave the State a significant look, as he replied, "Cæsar is dead, ma'am; but, alas! *Cæsarism did not die with Cæsar.*"

The State bit her lip and dropped her eyes, as she asked him what the crown of thorns signified.

"It is heresy," he said; "and so long as it exists, that crown of thorns will encircle the ship."

The State became pensive, and there was a pause until she observed something lying on the deck, close to the binnacle. "What is that horror lying over there?" she inquired. "The very sight of it makes me recoil from the ship."

"Ah," archly spoke up the Jesuit, a little surprised that her Majesty should not recognize it; "why, ma'am, that is another gift of the State. It is the scourge with which they lacerated the body of our Lord."

"You know," replied the State, trying to excuse such barbarity, "that it was given out of pity."

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"Verily!" retorted the Jesuit, "it was a tender mark of sympathy!"

"Hush, hush," said her Majesty; "you know very well that it was only given with the hope of saving our Lord's life; and you should have destroyed it, and not have kept it there to throw in my face the first time you got me here."

"Destroy it, ma'am!" spoke up the Jesuit, with more than usual energy; "it is what we have been trying to do for centuries, and the State has done her best to thwart us."

"What a falsehood!" replied her Majesty.

"I can prove to you, ma'am, that the State has prevented us destroying it, and that it is the same scourge the world still lacerates us with." Her Majesty threw him an angry glance as the Jesuit continued, "The thongs of the scourge are the passions of mankind, and they bruise and tear whoever tries to uproot them. To each lash is appended its own signification. I will let you look at it through St. Peter's telescope, SIMPLICITY: we have it here by St. Peter's horoscope, the gift of PROPHECY. With the telescope you will be able to see the scourge more distinctly."

The State took up the telescope most reluctantly, as the Jesuit added, "To the thong of Pride is attached an envenomed toad, whose fangs curve like fish hooks, and embed themselves mercilessly into the flesh, when we are lashed by an unrelenting world. To the lash of Injustice is affixed an iron hand with fingers of twisted steel. Ambition's thong has a clog of adamant, to which is attached an envenomed spur. To Cruelty is appended a heart of caustic, that blisters whatsoever it

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beats upon. To Human Respect is tied a leaden skull. To Envy a panther's claw. To the lash of Cowardice is hung a molten snail; and to Superstition a burr with envenomed prongs, like awls, that suddenly dart out, and would pierce our very souls were we not protected by a coat of mail."

"Enough!" exclaimed the State, as she let the telescope fall; "I do not care to hear more. But what is that aperture that I see on the deck?"

"That is a living spring," answered the Jesuit, "and its source is the fountain of life. It is there we go to refresh ourselves."

"I am thirsty," said the State. And her Majesty here arose as if she would go to it.

"Stay, ma'am," said the Jesuit, "I am afraid that you cannot reach it, for your collar is too stiff, having been done up in guile, and your stays are too tight, being drawn by policy. To drink out of that spring we have first to divest ourselves of everything, and then get down on our knees and hold our heads very low, for the spring is very deep; but one drop suffices to inebriate us, and to renew our strength."

"That lessens my admiration, then, for the whole ship," interrupted the State, "if its spring is so difficult to drink out of as that; besides, if its water is what you say it is, I should want to plunge into it."

"So we all do," said the Jesuit; "but, alas! that spring is a wound which closes when approached by unhallowed lips."

"A wound!" exclaimed the State, as an expression of horror passed over her face. "And you say it is deep. Who should dare to have made it?"

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"Think awhile, ma'am, and perhaps your recollections may calm your resentment; for that wound was made by a soldier's spear, when it pierced the Heart of our God."

"If you refer," interposed her Majesty, "to the crucifixion of our Lord, I hope you are not going to lay that wound to the State, too, for she washed her hands of it all."

"Washing her hands, ma'am, did not serve. It was the State that delivered Christ to His enemies, which dyed her hands with His blood. In vain did she wash them, for they were soiled with an ineffaceable stain."

"No, no," retorted her Majesty, "her hands were clean; it was the Jews that did it all."

"Don't throw all the blame on the Jews, ma'am; they crucified Him, it is true, but it was the hand of the State that pierced His Heart, and it was not only the God-Man's Heart that the State then pierced, but she pierced at the same time the Heart of His Mother; for St. Peter's Bark is but those two Hearts united together."

The State was moved as she thoughtfully cast a retrogressive view on the past.

"You see," continued the Jesuit, "the only things about St. Peter's Bark that your Majesty dislikes are the gifts of the State."

Her Majesty, as if she had not heard this last remark, inquired, "What is that long chain, composed of large beads, that is attached to the cross, and which encircles the hull of the ship?"

"That is the rosary; its wire is the celestial telegraph, and its beads are the silent oars that help to move St. Peter's Bark. They cleave to its sides, and are so arranged as to break the force of the waves when they come dashing against it."

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"I see," observed the State, "that they are so ingeniously arranged as to spell Roma, that much hated name. And why have you written it so often?"

"I doubt if your Majesty understands the word, or if you read it correctly."

"I understand the word perfectly," spoke up the State, "and I read it correctly, notwithstanding that it is not written there properly."

"It looks perfectly correct to me," said the Jesuit.

"But can you not see," returned her Majesty, impatiently, "that wherever it is written it begins with an R that is turned the wrong way."

"It is turned the right way," insisted the Jesuit, "for it is a mystical word, and like all other mysteries, it can only be understood by those sailing on the Bark, who can see it then as it is reflected on the water, when on every wave is written, Amor — Amor — Amor. Those words, as they float over the waves, are the buoys of the ship, and are attached to the Bark by mystical threads; and the reason we have written them so often is, it is the name of the ship, and the name of the owner, the name of the port we are bound for, the name of our treasure, and it is the only language that should ever there be spoken."

The State now perceived that there were pendants floating around the Bark, in the shape of small hearts, like miniatures of the ship itself. She asked the Jesuit what they meant.

"They are the different Religious Orders in the Church," he said, "and are placed like life-boats around the ship. They are attached to it by the cords of obedience. They often save passengers that slip off the deck.

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Most of them are inhabited by fishermen, good working men, who launch out into the stream and fish in men.

"The contemplative orders are at the prow, and form the vanguard of the ship. You would think they were the most exposed, but they are not, for they wear an invincible armour, and are enclosed. The one at the stern marked A. M. D. G. belongs to the Jesuits."

"I should much prefer," interposed the State, "to be attached to the side of the Bark. You would be better protected from the gales."

"We have to be," replied the Jesuit, "where St. Ignatius placed us. He tied us to the cross, and there he wishes us to remain. He knew that St. Peter's Bark required a guard boat of well armed men, for we are soldiers, but being constantly exposed to rough weather we wear tarpaulins, and are known as the Pope's Black Guards."

"Ah," archly remarked the State, "that accounts, I suppose, for your being so near the gangway. I should think that you would have some pretty lively times down there."

"That we have," rejoined the Jesuit, "for whenever the rabble want to make a raid on the Bark, they begin their attacks by first firing into us."

The State here closed her eyes, and with a quick gesture of the hand interrupted him. "We are digressing," she said, "pray continue the description." And she called his attention to Joy, who was then skipping over the deck. "Have you any other pets on the ship?" she asked.

A bitter smile passed over the features of the Jesuit at this abrupt turning of his own weapons against himself.

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He became thoughtful, and then meekly said, "We have another pet that we keep in the binnacle."

"Ah," exclaimed her Majesty, a little surprised, "in the pillar of MORTIFICATION. Is it a kitten?"

"Not exactly, ma'am; it is a cat."

"Is it white?" inquired the State, who now appeared deeply interested.

"No," replied the Jesuit, curtly; "it is grey."

"Has it a fine long tail?" asked the State.

"Alas, ma'am," answered the Jesuit, in a tone of embarrassment, "it has nine of them."

"How wonderful!" exclaimed the State, with a look of incredulous amazement. "I should be delighted to see St. Peter's cat."

"Madam," said the Jesuit, very seriously, "it is a creature that we are permitted to feel, but are not allowed to parade. You must be satisfied with my description of it, for if St. Peter caught me showing it to you, he might give it to me."

"I see," rejoined the State, "as you have made a vow of poverty you could not accept it, and you would not like to refuse St. Peter anything. But you might get his permission to give it to me."

"Madam," replied the Jesuit, who now deeply regretted having referred to that mystery, "I doubt if you would feed it; so if you will permit me, we will let the cat be."

"But I am most curious to know its origin," persisted the State, "and of what use it can be."

"It was first seen, ma'am, in the temple of Jerusalem, and our Lord made use of it to chase the money-changers out of it, and we keep it now to drive out the devil."

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"I am not so afraid of the devil," said the State, "as I am of that crown of thorns, the scourge; and do I not see three nails?"

"Yes," replied the Jesuit, "they are a gift of the Jews; with them we are nailed to the cross by the world."

"They are enough to frighten any one from going on the Bark," remarked the State.

"They are not to be feared at all, ma'am, for since they touched the body of our Lord they can be made the means of our sanctification. But there are other things to be dreaded on St. Peter's Bark, of which the ignorant should be always on their guard, and in order to escape them they should be willing to be led by old tried mariners; for every soul that is striving towards perfection is like a ship in a storm, that requires an experienced hand at the helm."

"Tell me what those dangers are," inquired the State, "for I am curious to know them."

"When we stand on the deck of St. Peter's Bark," continued the Jesuit, "and we look straight at the light as it shines down from the Dove, we sometimes become dazzled and bewildered, and might walk off the deck if we were not held on by the cords of OBEDIENCE."

"And what then?" interrupted the State.

"And what then!" exclaimed the Jesuit. "It is the mark of a deluded mind. There are many who, having basked long in that light, have become so bewildered that they imagined they could see clearer, and know the way to heaven better than the old sailors. They have left the Bark, and have built ships of which they themselves were the owners, the lights, and the captains."

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"I wish you would tell me," said the State, "the safest way to behold that light."

"The safest way, ma'am, is to look at it as it is reflected on the deck, for the deck is like a mirror often seen on a lake; and while therein beholding the celestial light, we are permitted to take a good look at ourselves, for it is a mirror that does not flatter; on the contrary, it exaggerates our defects."

"But tell me how you look at yourselves in it," inquired her Majesty; "it appears to me that it must be very awkward."

"We begin at the mast," said the Jesuit, "and leaning over, we walk backwards, that we may get a larger range of the light, and a good view of the mast, to which the olive branch clings, where JOY is attached. The world, seeing us in that position, calls us retrogressive. It is true that we see less of the world, for our backs are turned upon it, but in that position we learn to know WISDOM, JOY, and PEACE, and by looking steadily on the deck we at length behold the face of God."

"I should think," observed the State, "that in walking backwards you might walk off the deck."

"There is not the least danger, for the cords of OBEDIENCE hold us on. Besides, the angels watch over us when we are holding ourselves in that position; and seeing us borne down by the jeers and scoffs of the world, they often take pity on us, and relieve us of our burden, and bearing us upwards on their wings, they leave us to repose in the bosom of God."

"Of what use, then, is MODESTY'S mirror," asked the State, "if our security, and such a glorious recompense, depends upon seeing ourselves in the deck?"

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"Far be it from me," said the Jesuit, "to detract in the least the value of MODESTY'S glass, for in it we regulate our thoughts, our gestures, our movements, and our words, so as to appear well in the presence of God; but it is fastened to the mast, and we hold ourselves erect when we look in it, and it makes us appear more beautiful than we really are. But we should bear in mind the reflections we have made in that glass, because we are not to stand before it the live-long day, or we might fall in love with ourselves: for, instead of walking backwards to get a better view of God, that light draws us forward to get a better view of ourselves, and there is a danger of it engendering spiritual pride. The angels watch over us there for a given time, and are edified; but if we remain too long, instead of bearing us up on their wings, they throw us down, and in picking ourselves up we get a good view of ourselves in the deck, which is a specific cure for spiritual pride, a disease which, if not taken in time, would germinate into presumption and prudery. Prudery is as adverse to MODESTY as hypocrisy is to PIETY, for when people are hypocrites we know that their bones are tainted, but when they are prudes we know that they are corrupted. We never become spiritually proud by looking down in the deck, for by leaning over to see ourselves in it the light shines on our back, and we appear to ourselves less beautiful than we are, and we there get a good view of WISDOM, and instead of falling in love with ourselves, we fall in love with God. We cannot see Him here so well, holding up our heads and looking straight at that spiritual sun, for He tells us Himself that we must see Him here as through a glass darkly, as we sometimes see the solar light beaming through the cathedral's panes,

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and that darkened glass in which we are to behold Him here on earth is the polished deck of St. Peter's Bark."

While the Jesuit was speaking, St. Peter appeared on board. The State at first did not perceive him, as her attention was drawn to an object in the water, directly in front of the prow. It looked like a fowl, but she could not discern its shape on account of a shadow, or rather, a mystical shade that was thrown on the water, and lay between it and the Bark.

"That shade is DETACHMENT," observed the Jesuit; "it is the haven of the Bark: you see that it surrounds the ship. When the Bark is in its haven it is free from the galling chains of concupiscence, and the haven becomes to it like the wings of the eagle."

"I will hear that anon," spoke up the State, "but I wish to know what that creature is over there. It must be of little worth, to be lying loose so far from the ship."

"Alas, ma'am, you are right; he is of very little worth in the condition he is, for he is perverted now, and represents the spirit of the age."

At those words her Majesty sprang to her feet, while her face flushed with rage, and her voice rent the air as she exclaimed, "Does St. Peter keep him there? does St. Peter keep him there?"

"You cannot reproach St. Peter, ma'am, for his position and condition, because it is down there that you and your adherents have dragged him. Had you left him with St. Peter, the devil would never have got possession of him."

The State then observed that the devil was close to him. "What!" she inquired, "is hell, then, so near?"

'Yes," answered the Jesuit, "it lies just beyond the

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haven of DETACHMENT, which has given rise to the saying that there is only a hair's breadth betwixt heaven and hell. Your Majesty can now see the position that the spirit of the age holds in the supernatural world."

The State was about to utter a shriek, when the Dove spread its wings, and let something fall on St. Peter that appears to the world's votaries like an ass's head, or their missing link.

The Jesuit, seeing her amazement, said, "In that ass's head is concealed a deep mystery, which is MEEKNESS. It is regarded as a delusion, and so it is to the greater part of mankind, who can see nothing in it but the ridiculous, whereas it contains the pearl of great price."

It had no sooner settled on St. Peter's head than he imagined himself the most undeserving of men.

"It is even a delusion," continued the Jesuit, "to those who have obtained it, for they are the last to imagine that they really possess it."

"I hope," exclaimed the State, "that St. Peter does not intend to wear it."

"He will certainly wear it," answered the Jesuit, "unless the devil gets it away from him, for he is proof against his attacks so long as he has it on."

"But he will appear ridiculous," said her Majesty, with a frown.

"He will appear ridiculous only to fools," responded the Jesuit, "but to the wise he will appear like an humble, meek, and holy man. Look at him through SIMPLICITY'S glass, and then tell me how he appears."

"Looking through this," she exclaimed, "he appears like one of the noblest works of God."

Rumour, that sleepless mischief, happened to pass

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when St. Peter received the grace of MEEKNESS. St. Peter tried to wrench out her tongue, but she was too swift-footed for him, and was off before he could stretch out his hand.

"The mystery of the ass's head," continued the Jesuit, "can never be appreciated by merely gazing upon it: we are obliged to possess it before we can fully comprehend it, and we would never ask for such a gift, either, until we have been in the interior of the Bark."

"I recollect," interrupted her Majesty, having heard that the interior of St. Peter's Bark is the only heaven to be found on earth. I wish you would take me in at once."

"I am afraid," said the Jesuit, "if I attempted to escort you there just as you are, that we should find the doors locked."

"But you can open them for me, can you not?"

"Yes," replied the Jesuit, scanning her from head to foot, "if you would go and get washed, and change your clothes, and I think that your eye would have to be straightened, too."

"Is there anything else I should have to do?" inquired the State, in a sarcastic tone.

"Yes," answered the Jesuit, "your sores would have to be attended to, for you know that you have been breaking out ever since you left home." The State turned crimson. "If you doubt my sincerity, ma'am," he added, "look at yourself in this glass."

The Jesuit then led her to MODESTY'S mirror. The State no sooner beheld herself as she really was, than she started back with an affrighted air.

"You see," said he, "that your robes are covered with

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gore, and that there is still some powder on your face from the battle of ———"

The State here put her hand on the Jesuit's mouth, and forbade him to even mention it.

But the Jesuit persisted, "You must get it all off, ma'am, before you can enter the interior of the Bark, and you will have to come home to have it done, too."

"Suppose," returned the State, "that you do it for me here at once."

"You can only be cleaned with the water of contrition, and I do not think that you brought any of it with you. If I should attempt to clean you with anything else it would have the same effect on your sores as if I had rubbed them with sand: I would only be making them worse than they are."

"If that is the case," said the State, "I must try to procure some of it. Where is that water to be got?"

"It can only be drawn, ma'am, at the fountain of life. If you will permit me I will lead you to it, but the ascent is very steep and slippery, and I think that you had better divest yourself of some of these superfluities," (and he pointed to her flounces, her high-heeled boots, and sash;) "for to reach that fountain we have to climb the steep barefooted, and are even then obliged to creep up on our hands and knees."

"But can you not go and draw it for me?" she asked.

"No, ma'am; I can only show you the way, you will have to go and draw for yourself; and when you have brought me that water I can make you as healthy and beautiful as you were in your youth, and it will straighten your eye, too."

The idea of becoming healthy and beautiful again

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pleased the State immensely, and she looked upon the Jesuit confidingly as she said to him, "I long to have my constitution strengthened, and my 'temples' quieted, for they often seem to me to beat intemperately and irregularly, and I sometimes fancy, too, that I hear an inner screaching in my brain."

"All of which can be remedied," answered the Jesuit, "if you will follow my directions and take my prescriptions."

"Tell me," she inquired, "is it as difficult to get out of the interior of the Bark as it is to enter it?"

"Oh dear no," answered the Jesuit, with a deep sigh. "There is nothing in this world so easy, for a mere thought or desire is often strong enough to bring you on deck again, and sometimes you have only to raise your eyes."

The State then recollected that she had brought the cock with her to be treated, and turning to see what had become of him, she beheld him crouched down in the very position where the Jesuit had strapped him.

She no sooner turned her back on the Bark to see what had become of the cock than the curtain instantly dropped. She then threw a hurried glance at the clock, as she drew her mantle about her, and motioned to the Jesuit to pick up the cock, and bring him to the carriage to her. The Jesuit, instead of picking him up, raised his foot as if he were going to kick him out; but the cock this time was too quick for him, for he darted by him like a flash, and ran down the hall, where he was stopped by a bolted door.

The State, as soon as she recovered from her surprise,

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exclaimed, "St. Peter is right: you are capital surgeons. Why, you have cured the cock, and I now believe that you can straighten my eye." Her Majesty then bade him good day, after appointing a time to see him again.

CHAPTER XII.

Her Majesty was no sooner in the street than she found it was not so easy to conceal her movements from the public, for the thoroughfares were crowded with people, who had heard that the State had gone to the Gesù to receive an instruction, and had taken the cock with her, and they had been waiting for hours to see in what condition he would come out of a Jesuit college.

The doors were no sooner opened than the cock raced down the steps, like a prize walker making his first rounds for the belt. The crowd instantly began hooting and screaming as they rushed after him, trying to catch him; but the cock made a spring and flew over their heads, until he reached a turn, when he disappeared without leaving any trace of himself.

As the State turned to see what direction the cock had taken, she saw Mr. Merrystein, who appeared very anxious to catch him, and her Majesty concluded that he must have caught him, and that he was playing his little game over again; so she drove unconcerned to her palace without him. This time, however, Mr. Merrystein was looking for him in earnest, but the people no sooner discovered Mr. Merrystein hunting for him than they were satisfied

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that he had him, and they told him that he must hand him over to them, for they were not going always to let him have the honour and glory of catching him and taking him to the State. In vain did Mr. Merrystein expostulate, and assure them that he had only caught a glimpse of him, and that he had not been able to catch him; no one believed him, and they began tearing his coat off him, hoping to find him; and then they beat him, as if he had deceived them, and made them lose their time tearing his clothes from his back, and searching him for nothing. And thus the cock got effectually the start of them, and would be sure to get away from them.

Lord Halsfelt, who witnessed the proceedings, considered himself fortunate never to have been able to catch him. But Mr. Merrystein and his party were delighted with the rough treatment he had just received from the populace, and they were determined to make capital out of it. So they laid Mr. Merrystein out on the side walk as if he were dead, and one of them began pronouncing a panegyric over him, while his friends mingled among the people uttering such expressions as would move them to pity and sorrow for the cruel injustice they had done the murdered man.

The people listened with the deepest interest to all that the orator had to say in regard to the scene at the palace that day, when the feathers were returned.

Lord Halsfelt drew his hat over his eyes, the better not to be recognized. He foresaw that his political career was ended for the present, and that it was useless for him to strive against the inevitable, since his rival had the advantage of a feather that was seen floating between them. It set him seriously thinking of the fickleness of fortune,

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and he felt that it was beneath the dignity of man to let his happiness depend on a goddess so capricious, and he asked himself what there was in this life to cling to that could give us better support. Whilst he was buried in deep thought a gust of wind wafted a feather before him, and the wind, as it whizzed by him, seemed to whisper in his ears, "That he should not be surprised that a feather had been able to turn his destiny over, for all earthly gain and fame had not the weight of one." He then resolved that as soon as he was forced to retire he would go from one pole to the other, and then settle down on the equator if he could find it.

He was aroused from his reverie by boisterous sounds of rejoicing. One of Mr. Merrystein's friends, in helping to place his form on a litter, had felt his pulse, and thought that there was a gentle quiver. Restoratives were brought, and an old woman tried to force a dose of hartshorn down Mr. Merrystein's throat; but, alas! his jaws were set, and in her efforts to open them she let some of the hartshorn fall into his eyes. The corpse instantly moved and turned over on his face, and they fancied that they heard him sneeze. An old friend brought him some brandy and water, and turned him over on his back. This time the muscles of his jaws relaxed, and he was able to receive and retain the restoring beverage. Mr. Merrystein was then declared to be alive. He was no sooner on his feet than, oh joy! he was able to make a speech. They applauded every word he said, and he finished by assuring them that none of them should ever be hung for him. They then withdrew to the neighbouring taverns to finish the day in the worship of the proletarian gods, beer and tobacco.

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CHAPTER XIII.

Twenty-four hours passed, and as no tidings of the cock came, it was suggested to the State that he had been spirited away by some miserly soul in the hope of securing a large reward for his return.

One of her Majesty's secretaries, who had not witnessed the cock's last feat, wrote the advertisement, which was inserted in all the leading journals, and he described the lost cock as a comb-less, tail-less one, with a broken leg.

Early the next day all the thoroughfares leading to the palace were blocked up with people carrying in their arms a comb-less, tail-less cock, with a broken leg. There was only one exception, and that was an Irishman, brother to her Majesty's fowl-feather-counter, who was a pedlar of perfumery and pomades: he carried in his arms a cock with a beautiful comb, a flourishing tail, and two sound legs. The difficulty now was, how they could decide which was the sacred one, and as the question was a religious one, it was referred to her Majesty's ecclesiastical board, over which the State, her lord archbishop, and twelve ecclesiastical judges were to preside.

The court had no sooner met in convocation than one hundred claimants for the reward were admitted at a time, among whom were stalwart men, old women, girls, and boys.

Father Eel had been summoned to testify as to the sacred cock's identity, as a rumour had been circulated

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that through his skill the sacred cock's leg had been cured. This report had drawn large numbers of the faculty, and had also caused considerable anxiety among those who carried the cocks with broken legs, who persisted that even if Father Eel had cured his leg, the cock had broken it again when he ran away, and they tried to prove it by the advertisement, which demanded a cock that was maimed. Several lawyers accompanied the claimants to see that no technical advantage was taken of them by her Majesty's ecclesiastical board. The proceedings were about to begin, when lo, an egg was seen to roll off an old woman's lap from under a cock. This phenomenon startled the whole court, and one of the judges shouted out, "Where did that egg come from?"

A child spoke up. "It came out of granny's old hen."

"No, bedad," cried out granny, "for me hen is a cock. It was that Irishman behind me that laid the egg in me lap."

"May St. Patrick make me swallow a snake, yer riverences," retorted the Irishman, "if I ever laid it in the ould woman's lap at all, and if yer honours doubt me word, ye have jist only to take a look over her, and ye'll find plenty more of thim on the flure."

The board for a moment became speechless at this new revelation, while every eye was fixed on the fowls, trying to discover which of them were cocks and which of them were not: but it was impossible to judge from appearances, for with their combs torn off, and their tails pulled out, no one could tell a hen from a cock, as most of the claimants held them with their feet covered up.

The board, in order to elucidate this mystery, gave its decision that the cocks or hens, whatever they might be,

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should be taken down into the inner courtyard and fed, and that they should be accompanied by their owners, a squad of keepers, and ten reporters, and as soon as a hen was discovered, it should be seized and locked up in a cell, so that there might be no possibility of one of them being brought before the board again. As there was no doubt about the fowl that the Irishman had brought being a cock, he was permitted to remain. The court, however, was a little surprised when the Irishman set up a claim, and pretended that the cock he had brought was the sacred one.

"Yer honours," said he, "I firmly believe this to be the cock you are looking for. I found him the other day in a mutilated condition, but I rubbed some cosmetic on each end of the crayture, and ye all see the result,—a magnificent comb and a beautiful tail, and with some cement that I invented myself I mended his leg, and here are me twelve witnesses that can spake the truth like the twelve apostles."

The judges shook their heads, and did not deign to reply to what they considered a most stupendous fraud. They were considering what punishment should be meted out to a man who could invent such lies, when the Irishman spoke up:

"There is no John Orton here this time, but a viritable Tichborne, and I could prove it to ye, if I could git plinty of money, and yer honours would give me yer time."

This was too much for the court, and one of the judges said to him, sternly, "Remember, sir, that you are not now in Great Britain, where such suits thrive. Don't imagine that you can come down here and ruin us financially by trying to put that wrong creature in the right

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one's place. There is too much of that sort of thing done in the north, but down here such suits don't take."

The Irishman's case was here interrupted by a game-keeper coming in with one of the mutilated fowls he had brought from the yard. He whispered his report to the judge, who with an assenting nod indicated he was satisfied that the fowl he had brought up should be put down as a cock. He was about to write it down, and label it as such, when his attention was attracted by a skirmish at the door, caused by a man trying to force his way in with a hen, who declared that the cock that had just been brought up belonged to him, and that the hen he held belonged to the man who had just brought in the cock. The intruder was silenced, and most unceremoniously put out, but not, however, until after he had managed to let in the hen. The keeper seeing it, supposing it to be the fowl he had brought up, took it to the judge, who tied a tag around its neck and labelled it a cock. As the keeper turned to put it down, he beheld the other fowl that he himself had brought up, and supposing it to be the hen that the man had just been wrangling about, he caught it up by the neck and gave it a twist, opened the door, and threw it out.

One of the judges thought it unnecessary to bring in any more, for the cock he had labelled he was sure was the sacred one, for it answered in every respect to the description given of him in the advertisement. But the other judges did not agree with him, and thought it more prudent not to give a decision until they had seen and compared them all.

During the proceedings thus far her Majesty and her lord archbishop had not spoken. The latter occasionally

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knit his brows, as if he were dissatisfied, while her Majesty looked bewildered, as if she knew not what to say, but she greatly admired her archbishop's prudence in deliberating before he uttered a word. Their attention was now attracted by a noise that proceeded from the inner court. When the word was given that the claimants should again appear before the board, every man, woman, and child made a rush for a cock. Whoever got hold of one held on to it, and whoever disputed for it pulled on to it, which soon ended in every cock being pulled in twain. They then let out the hens, and disputed for them with as much tenacity as they had done for the cocks, which ended in their tearing to pieces every hen. The people then struck out at each other, and never stopped until one or the other was blinded, knocked senseless, or maimed.

An ignorant keeper chanced to remark that the scene was a warning to those who were anxious to become favourites at court, for on account of the high position her Majesty had chosen to give a poor cock, it had brought pain and torture on himself, and disaster and suffering on his whole race, and on all those who had hoped to elevate themselves by being connected with him in any way.

Meanwhile the streets were crowded with people claiming the reward, and clamouring to be let in. To their great joy the doors were suddenly opened, and one hundred more, carrying mutilated fowls in their arms, were permitted to appear before the board. Several witnesses were now examined, whose testimony it was impossible to controvert. They declared that they had seen the cock when he ran out of the college, and his leg was cured and was black. Father Eel was put upon the stand to corroborate

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their testimony. Every eye was fixed upon him as he raised his hand, and one of the lawyers put the question to him, "Was the cock's leg cured?"

The Jesuit replied, "I don't know."

"Did you not examine it, sir?" inquired one of the judges.

The Jesuit answered, "No."

"But you did something to it," put in a lawyer: "tell the court what you did."

The Jesuit replied, "I strapped it."

"What!" exclaimed several judges at once, "do you mean to say that you strapped it without looking at it?"

Said the Jesuit, "Yes."

It was impossible for the spectators to repress their admiration for so much dexterity and skill in fowl surgery, and they naturally burst forth in one round of applause, which was instantly suppressed by the board, who gave orders that the galleries should be cleared if the applause was repeated. This threat imposed silence, as every one was anxious to hear the Jesuit's testimony, because the question in which science was most deeply interested was about to be asked. All held their breath so as to catch every syllable that the Jesuit uttered. One of the judges, who had pledged himself to do all in his power to advance the cause of science, here arose, and in a very grave tone began: "How did you manage to keep the cock still long enough for the bone to set?"

The Jesuit compressed his lips, and in a very determined tone answered, "I can't tell."

Upon hearing these words the judges, lawyers, spectators, doctors, and claimants, forgetting themselves and the dignity of the board, simultaneously burst forth, "But

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you must tell the court." And the judge put the same question to him again.

"I suppose," replied the Jesuit, "that he kept himself still."

"By what means, sir?" asked the judge, angrily.

"I suppose," replied the Jesuit, "by the force of his will."

"What makes you suppose that?" asked the judge.

"Because I don't know," responded the Jesuit.

It was evident to them all from these answers that the Jesuits were determined to conceal their knowledge in fowl surgery from the faculty, so as to oblige the rising generation, if they wished to be instructed in it, to come to them.

The Jesuit had hardly taken his seat when there was a tumult at the door, caused by a barefooted boy, who made his way through the court in spite of the guard, keepers, ushers, and policemen, who tried to keep him out, for he carried under his arm a most filthy-looking cock, the very sight of which made everybody keck. The board resolved to dispose of this case at once, so as to get rid of him, and they ordered the boy to put the cock down on the floor, so that they could get a good look at him, which caused a great sensation in the court, for it was discovered that the filthy-looking cock had a black leg. The boy no sooner let go of him than he started after the fine-looking one that the Irishman had brought; but the cock with the black leg soon got the advantage of his fine-looking adversary, and raising himself up with all the force of one that had been trained for such a fight, he gave the fine one a dig that laid him flat upon the floor, which set the whole court in an uproar, for the Irishman and his twelve wit-

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nesses set up a wail as they would have done over a corpse. The noise did not disconcert the cock with the black leg in the least, for he instantly started for the hen with the label on. As soon as silence could be restored, the judge who had tied the tag on the hen ordered it to be brought to him.

"I am bound to protect that cock," said he, "for I am certain that he is the right one, and I am not going to let him be killed by that black-legged thing that has just come in. Answer me, young man," he cried out to the boy, "where did you find that cock?"

"I found him," spoke up the lad, "on St. Peter's Bark, over on the hatchway."

"Do you mean to say that on St. Peter's Bark it is as dirty as that?" resumed the judge.

"Some part of it is," answered the boy. "He had been hiding among a heap of sacrilegious spoils, and had rubbed up against a lot of excommunicated men that were holding on to them, and it was that which soiled him and makes him smell."

"Why did you not wash him, then?" said the judge, sternly. "I have half a mind to fine you for insulting the board by bringing him here in such a plight."

"It is not my fault," answered the boy, "for I have been washing him all night, and that is what kept me so long; but one of St. Peter's crew caught me at it, and knew what ailed him: he told me I was wasting my time over him, for there was not water enough in the sea to clean him, that it was only St. Peter that could take it off him."

"Why did you not go to St. Peter, then, and let him clean him?" asked the judge.

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"I went to the Vatican with him," said the boy, "but got no further than the steps, for the Swiss swore that they would fire on him if I attempted to take him upstairs, because they said he smelt like an excommunicated soul, so I had to bring him here just as he is."

The boy's cross-examination was interrupted by another phenomenon. The two cocks were lying together on the floor, the fine-looking one that the Irishman had brought, and the black-legged one, they lying close to the hen that was labelled a cock, when an egg was seen to roll from under them out on the floor. A lively dispute then arose between the judges, who tried to decide which of the three had laid it. They were certain it was one of the three, as they were the only ones near it.

Her Majesty's lord archbishop, who until now had not spoken a word, requested that the egg should be brought to him. He no sooner examined it than he declared that it was not an egg at all, although it had every appearance of one, but that things were not always what they seemed, and he called it an undeveloped idea. "If you will put it carefully away," said he, "and keep it warm, time will reveal the light it conceals."

That was entirely a too high church view of the thing for the others, and they begged leave to disagree with his lordship, and wanted to prove to him that he was mistaken by breaking the egg. His lordship, however, refused to let them touch it, and they openly accused him of holding views that could not stand a test. At these words the archbishop arose to defend himself, but not, however, until he had put the egg beyond their reach.

"Is not the cock," he began, "an emblem of the state church?"

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"No one denies that," spoke up one of the judges, who thought that his lordship was asking a superfluous question; but as his lordship continued they saw the wisdom that had dictated it.

"You all agree with me that the cock is a figure of her Majesty's church, and that he also, in character, mien, and bearing, represents the spirit of the age. Well, then, has not her Majesty's church proved productive? Has it remained one and indissoluble like the old one we sprang from, whose obstinacy in that respect can only be compared to a mule, that refuses to be led, and which is incapable of producing more of its kind? But we broke loose from that inane and retrogressive spirit, and having gained our independence, we have fructified, and covered the earth with our different sects, until we can now safely say that we have as many different churches among us as there are hairs on our heads."

The spectators were about to applaud, but were instantly checked by a look from the judges.

"In order," continued the archbishop, "to produce these manifold persuasions, it was more than the cock could do, as cock simple; he had to have the powers and faculties of a hen, and I believe they were given to him; and whenever he lays an egg, if it is carefully preserved it will become an opinion, out of which spring our divers churches, which will keep us for ever on the progressive."

One of the judges knit his brows and shook his head, as he observed: "You may talk about cock's eggs as much as you please, but I would be willing to swear that there is a hen around here somewhere."

The other judges derided the idea too, and one of them

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inquired if any one had ever heard before of such a thing as a cock's egg.

The Jesuit alone raised his hand. He was called immediately and put upon the stand. The doctors were delighted to see him again, hoping to learn something. The judges too were not sorry, for they hoped to be able to draw something out of him.

"Do you mean to say, sir," inquired a judge, "that you ever before heard of a cock's egg?"

"I do," answered the Jesuit, "and I agree with her Majesty's lord archbishop, that your different sects and persuasions are hatched from cock's eggs."

At those words his lordship bowed, which showed that he was eminently pleased.

"But," continued the Jesuit, raising his voice, "perhaps you are not aware cock's eggs are brooded by serpents, and that they produce basilisks, whose very breath and look are fatal; we call them heretical ideas, or opinions. The prophet Isaias describes them in the fifth verse of the fifty-ninth chapter, where he says: 'They have broken the eggs of asps, and have woven the webs of spiders; he that shall eat of their eggs shall die, and that which is hatched shall break out into a basilisk.'"

The judges brought down their hammers to try to drown his voice, but the Jesuit kept raising it still higher, as he cried out: "Your lordship is right, for your churches all sprang from them; we agree with you for once."

"Put him out!" screamed the judges, "put him out!" and the Jesuit was thus summarily expelled from the court.

As the doors closed on the Jesuit's form his lordship

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arose and said: "I see nothing now to be done but to decide which of the cocks is the sacred one, and then we can adjourn, for I find the sitting long."

"What else have we been trying to do since we came?" retorted the judges, "but it is not so easy a thing to decide, when so many are brought in at a time; and there is a probability too that more than one third of them are hens. If your lordship thinks it is so easy to decide, please to tell us which is the sacred one."

"I have been watching the proceedings closely," resumed his lordship, "though I have said nothing. But I am now ready to declare under oath that the fine-looking cock the Irishman brought is the one I blest."

A doctor here interposed, and was equally willing to swear that the one with the tag tied around its neck was the one that her Majesty had lost, for it was precisely like the one he had treated at the palace. There was a majority, however, who suspected that the cock with the black leg was the one they were looking for, but he had turned up in such a filthy condition that no one seemed inclined to acknowledge him, as no one wished to clean him.

The doctor, who was waiting for some one to agree with him, caught up the hen in a fit of impatience. "If no one wants this cock," said he, "I will keep him myself."

Her Majesty's lord archbishop here raised his hand and bade him stay. "I think," he added, "that I have found a way out of this difficulty. You know that we have always believed and taught that in matters of religion every one has a right to his own opinion, and I think that as a correct emblem of her Majesty's Church there should be three cocks instead of one. The cock with the fine

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comb and feathers is the emblem of the *High* Church, and the one that is labelled will do for the *Low*, and the cock with the black leg will answer for the *Broad;* as they don't believe in hell, they may have him and see if they can clean him."

This liberal decision was unanimously approved by the High, the Low, and the Broad, but gave general dissatisfaction among the hundreds of aspirants for the reward, which was immediately divided between the Irishman, the barefooted boy, and the keeper who was supposed to have brought up the cock with a tag. These numerous aspirants demurred from his lordship's decision, and each of them declared under oath that he as firmly believed that the one he had brought was the one her Majesty had lost.

"Well," said the judges, who now agreed with the archbishop, "keep them, then, if you believe you have the right one, for you have all as much right to your opinion as we have to ours."

"That may be," they shouted back, "but we wish to have our share of the reward."

"Oh, no," spoke up his lordship, gravely; "the *High*, the *Low*, and the *Broad* are the only ones that are paid, for that is the law."

Hearing those words, from which they knew there was no appeal, as it was the decision of the highest ecclesiastical court, they began murmuring, or rather growling, among themselves, and the archbishop, to silence them, said that he would read to them a passage from Isaiah, which referred to them. They were consoled when they heard that the great prophet had thought of them, but became dissatisfied when they heard his opinion of them, for the archbishop read to them in a shrill voice the

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eleventh verse from the fifty-sixth chapter of Isaiah, "They are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that can never understand. They all look to their own way, every one for his own gain from every quarter."

The broad Churchmen meanwhile were deliberating how they could clean the cock with the black leg, who was then wandering about the hall. At length he took a position by himself in the centre of the room, where he remained perfectly motionless for a few moments, and then straightened himself up as if he were going to start off on a walk. Every one drew back, fearing that he was coming towards them. Yet he never moved towards any one, but remained perfectly quiet a few moments longer, when he gave a violent shake, and lo, all his feathers dropped off, and he stood, to the astonished gaze of all, as if he had been plucked alive while standing on the floor.

Many timid women shrieked as if they saw a ghost, but her Majesty, with great presence of mind, cried out to the ushers, "Cover him up! cover him up!"

One of them took a newspaper, and spreading it over him, tried to tuck him up in it, but the cock got out of it in less time than it took to spread it over him.

"Ridiculous!" spoke up the State, impatiently, "to suppose that you could cover him with a newspaper, when you know that it exposes everything. Take down that flag that is waving over the door, and those mottoes that are hung on the wall, and wrap them around him."

While they were getting them down the Irishman remarked, as he fixed his eyes on the black-legged cock, "He has been among church thieves, and he only wants to show you how a soul looks when it is excommunicated.

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You see that it strips it of everything it had a right to before."

These words made the people start, but they made no impression on the archbishop, who cried out to the keepers, "That man is raving: put him out, and don't give him another chance to open his mouth."

The keepers did not at first heed the archbishop's commands, they were so busy getting down the mottoes and flag. They had no sooner wound them about the black-legged cock than the representative of the Broad Church party arose, and drew from his pocket a Bible, and then stretched forth his hand to impose silence, as he wished to be heard. Every one was eager to listen to what he had to say at that stage of the proceedings, but it was difficult to catch his words on account of the noise that the keepers made in trying to get out the Irishman, who was determined to stay, for he too wished to hear what the reverend gentleman who represented the Broad Church party had to say.

"The happy vision that I see before me," the speaker began, as he pointed to the black-legged cock, who was now most gorgeously draped, "has renewed my strength and increased my faith, for I see that this day's proceedings were predicted in the thirtieth chapter of Proverbs, for the Bible says: 'There are three things which go well: a lion, the strongest of beasts, who hath no fear of anything he meeteth; a cock girded about the loins'"—

He was about to proceed when the ushers opened the door to thrust out the Irishman, when the wind blew in a tremendous gale, which scattered the feathers in every direction that the cock with the black leg had shed.

The people, and whoever they touched, judges, doctors,

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and all, began stamping and cursing, despite her Majesty's presence, as the feathers flew in their faces, and on their hands and necks; for it was like being sprinkled with vitriol, they burnt so deeply into the flesh; and they wondered how the boy had managed to hold him, till they saw in his hand a curved piece of tin which he was then holding over his head. In a few seconds the hall was cleared, and the court was thus adjourned *sine die;* and it is not yet known what interpretation the Broad Church party intends to put on that passage in the Bible.

Notwithstanding the bustle and disorder, none of them left without securing their emblems. The High Church party took possession of the fine-looking cock that the Irishman found, which was universally acknowledged to have been made up. The Low Church carried off the hen that was labelled a cock; and the Broad Church took possession of the one that had shed his feathers, and had been girded up, and in which they found so much consolation and strength, since he had been referred to in the book of Proverbs.

CHAPTER XIV.

Early the next morning, while the Jesuits were at their devotions, they little dreamed of the tide of prosperity that was flowing in their favour, until they heard a violent knocking and ringing at the door, and they beheld every thoroughfare and passage that led to the college blocked up with men, women, and children, bringing a cock or a hen with a broken leg for the Fathers to mend.

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The superior no sooner beheld from a window the anxious crowd that was waiting below to see them, than turning to the Fathers, he said, "Prosperity might be the ruin of us: let us fly from it."

At the word of command the Jesuits started off like a well-drilled band, without stopping to take one longing, lingering look behind. Father Eel alone remained, because he had got caught in the meshes of the State that he was not strong enough to break, and his superior, seeing his condition, gave him permission to stay.

The college was no sooner abandoned than the people rushed into it, and as the doors were not large enough to let the whole crowd in at once, some got in by the windows, others scaled the wall, while a few climbed upon the roof and threw themselves down the chimneys. But a great disappointment awaited them all, for they expected to find the college full of fowl carcases and implements used for fowl surgery, but alas! nothing at all, for the only thing they found to wonder at was some writing on the floor.

The room in which this strange writing was discovered was instantly taken possession of by the minister of public instruction, and a double guard was placed upon the door. Photographs of the writing were struck off, and distributed, at the expense of the State, among the erudites of both hemispheres, but to interpret it puzzled them all.

A coloured woman was sent one day to clean the room, who was anxious to see what the learned men were racking their brains about, and the moment she laid her eyes upon the floor, she exclaimed, "Why, dat writin bees nothing but cock tracks; we always sees 'em arter a rain on de kitchen floor."

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"Stuff and nonsense," cried Professor Lynx; "don't you see that it was done with a pen and ink?"

"The pen was found beside it, shure," interposed an Irishman.

"And here is a period the size of a ball," said an Englishman.

"And an exclamation point, too, as big as a candle," rejoined an Italian.

"Stick to your scrubbing, Dinah," suggested a Yankee; "there is more to be made out of it yet."

"I spose larning," persisted Dinah, "bees a very fine thing; but I'd swear dat dem bees cock tracks, if dey be putting me in de grabe."

The woman was obliged to make way for several graduates who had come a long way to see the mysterious writing on the floor. Instead of going on with her scrubbing, she threw her scrubbing brush in the midst of them, and went down the steps on a full run, and never slackened her pace until she reached the school, where she had two sons. She no sooner entered it, than she took her children by the hand, and was going to take them away, when the teacher, laying his hand on her woolly head, said to her, "Stop, buzzard, the law compels you to send them to school, or it imposes a fine upon you, which you must pay."

The woman looked him full in the face, as the fire flashed in her eyes. "What!" she exclaimed, "'blige a *free* woman to send de boys whar she don't want dem to go, and whar dey make fools ob dem, too! You can't scare dis black child, and make her tink dat dar be such a law as dat in dis sibilized age. Why, we was better off dan dat when we war slaves." Saying which, she carried

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off her children; but the law made her suffer for it, for, as she could not pay the fine, they put her in jail.

Father Eel was obliged to conceal his domicile, for as soon as his whereabouts was discovered his apartments were besieged by the *literati* of the day, begging him to interpret the writing on the floor; or by a crowd beseeching him to cure a few hundred fowls that were maimed; or by the faculty, imploring him to give them a few lessons in fowl surgery. Alas! the bane of prosperity! He looked back with regret on the days when he was pelted in the streets, for the people then gave him a chance to breathe, but now it was dangerous for him to appear in the public walks, for he risked being smothered with attentions from the crowd, or carried in the people's arms. The State went regularly to him, however, to be instructed.

The missing feather had paved Mr. Merrystein's way to the ministry. Lord Halsfelt had left the country on a voyage of discovery.

CHAPTER XV.

Rumour, who saw St. Peter looking at himself in the deck, adorned with Meekness, imagined that he had an ass's head,* and she hastened away to herald to the world that the missing link had been discovered in Rome, and

* St. Peter appeared to the infidels then as Christ appeared to the pagans. In the hall of the Cæsars they represented a man crucified, with an ass's head, and they called it the Christian's God.

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that the conclave had made it Pope; that they had actually put it in the pontifical chair, for she had seen it there. Everybody was instantly seized with an irresistible impulse to fly to the Eternal City; particularly those who belonged to the *progressive* (?) school, hastened to Rome to do homage to the discovered link, for they suspected that the conclave had made it Pope as a *coup de main*, hoping to keep possession of it. But they were not going to be outdone by those wily Churchmen, and were going to prove that they had the best claim to it. They believed the recovered link would never forget its indebtedness to them for having prepared men's minds to receive it, for they believed that, were it not for them, instead of being made ruler of the largest co-operative body in the world, it might have been seized by the first showman it chanced to meet, and have been paraded through the streets, or set up in some museum for the curious to gaze upon and speculate over. They agreed to address it as holy Father, since it was seated in the chair of St. Peter.

Rome was soon filled with scientists who desired a special audience with his Holiness. The Pontiff made arrangements to receive them on a ship, which was a model of St. Peter's Bark, such as the State had seen at the Gesù, one of which is kept in every Catholic college.* The religious orders were drawn out, and stationed around the ship, so as to prevent the guests from slipping off the deck. They were certain that the instant the scientists laid their eyes on St. Peter, they would discover that Rumour had deceived them, and that he only differed

* The course in mystical theology. The substance they teach is the same. It is only portrayed in this work in a different form.

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from other men in humility and meekness. They unanimously acknowledged, however, that *that* school had made one step in advance, for, according to their conceived opinions, it was much more likely that man, instead of descending from a monkey, should have descended from an ass.

They were no sooner ushered into the presence of the discovered link, than they bowed down and kissed his feet with a fervour, devotion, and joy they had never before experienced. They could not comprehend the change that his presence alone instantly wrought in them, for the meek attitude of St. Peter as he stood before them softened their hearts, and drew them irresistibly towards him. They began parleying among themselves as to who should first address him, for each of them claimed the precedence. St. Peter at once undertook to settle their differences. "My friends," said he, "I am loath to much speaking, and trust that you will not feel it incumbent upon yourselves to entertain me with long speeches."

One of the Darwin school approached him, and said, "I beg that your Holiness will inform us all about yourself, and will tell us the reason we did not discover you before."

"I cannot tell you," replied St. Peter, "unless it is that you have been wilfully blindfolding yourselves, for I have been here for centuries with open arms to receive you."

"You misunderstand me," returned the Darwinite; "I do not refer to you officially as head of the Church. I refer to your individual self."

St. Peter shook his head. "You must excuse me,

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gentlemen," he said, "if I refuse to entertain you with a subject so unworthy."

This opposition to their wishes proved to them that he was true to his original instincts, and they began to fear that it would take as long to learn anything about his past history as it had taken to discover him. The Darwinite was about to address him again when St. Peter prevented him, saying:

"I should think that you would be tired by this time of discussing the origin of man. Instead of constantly looking back, trying to discover where a man came from, I would advise you to look forward, and try to find out where he is going to end."

They all thought it a capital idea, and wondered it had never occurred to them before.

"I propose," continued St. Peter, "that you set out at once on that voyage of discovery: my Bark is at your disposal; but before you risk your lives on it I would like to show you that it is the only ship that can live in perilous waters, and cannot be improved upon, and is equal to any emergency, for I wish you to feel safe when you are on board, and have confidence in me as your captain."

"Is the fare expensive?" one of them asked.

"Not at all," replied St. Peter, "for every passenger is expected to work his way on it with fear and trembling."

The prospect of having a pleasant trip did not seem possible to them under such conditions, and they looked at each other with misgivings, as one of them inquired, "Have you a steward on board?"

"We have," St. Peter answered, "and one, too, who can always be relied upon when we have tried to do our duty. He is called DIVINE PROVIDENCE."

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When they heard his name they contracted their brows and shook their heads, for not one of them was inclined to trust him.

"Do not think," said St. Peter, "that I am going to try to force you to make this trip. I only propose to show you my ship, and let you know something about the port she is bound for, and then, if you desire it, I will take you on board, and will expect you to work your way like the rest of us."

They all thought the proposition a fair one, and drew themselves up in a position to listen to him.

"The Bark we are on," said St. Peter, "is a perfect model of my ship, and I can row you over to mine in it."

"But why not show us your old ship at once?" they asked; "we would much rather see it, for, like yourself, it has a long history."

"Very true," replied St. Peter, as a shade of sadness passed over his features; "but it would be difficult for me to make you understand my Bark perfectly by letting you see it as it now appears externally. The truth is, that some of my children have been rigging it up to suit themselves, and they have made it appear more like an animal than a ship, and a harnessed, overloaded animal, too, that has a shameless creature astride its back; so excuse me if I do not take you on board until I have thoroughly explained to you by this model what it really is. If my Bark was cleaned and divested of its superfluous trappings, it is exactly like this one, with the exception of its proportions."

They reluctantly consented to let St. Peter have his own way, but only on condition that after he had finished

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he would let them look at his old ship, which for ages had been supposed to be sinking.

"I wish you to know my Bark thoroughly," said St. Peter, "and for that reason I prefer showing you first this model, for I wish you to be convinced that it was not built by any human contrivance, and that it was conceived in the mind of God before He created the world, and that He launched it here below for the use of all men as a means to convey them to the port of heaven."

As St. Peter uttered these words they gave each other a significant wink, as if they could undeceive him. But they no sooner began to examine the ship than they were struck with its beauty and inimitable symmetry, and began to covet it, and wished it belonged to them.

St. Peter, divining their thoughts, said, "It is in the power of every one of you, assisted by grace, to possess such a ship as this, and I trust you will remain with me long enough to prove it."

The mast, with its three triangular sails, at once fixed their attention. The sails of FAITH and HOPE appeared to them to be placed in direct opposition to the sail of CHARITY, which was contrary to their ideas of navigation.

"The course of my Bark is upwards," said St. Peter. "It is moved by the winds of ADVERSITY, which you know are always contrary; and it is raised by a lever, which is that cross you see over there projecting beyond the stern. We press on that with our WILL, which is free, and can press on it with great force, and whenever it bears down upon it, the ship ascends. The sails then become an equipoise that prevents the Bark rolling fore and aft, and from pitching and tossing in every direction."

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"Is the WILL, then," they inquired, "such a tremendous power that it can raise the whole ship by bearing down on that cross?"

"The WILL," answered St. Peter, "is the greatest engine that was ever created; it is an invisible locomotive, and is God's great gift to man; and He leaves him free to do with it whatever he likes, but He does not intend that we should make use of it for self-destruction, or that we should keep it still and let it get rusty; on the contrary, He expects us to keep it bright, and always running on the right track."

"Show us the track, if you please," they asked; "we hope that is not invisible too."

"Alas! no," replied St. Peter; "the track is plain enough: you will find it over there traced on the cross with the Blood of His Son."

"Oh," they said, as they recoiled from the sight, "we find the track a very narrow one for such a tremendous force to revolve upon."

"Very true," St. Peter replied, "I agree with you; but there is another road to run it on, if you choose, that is very wide. You will find it over there," said he, pointing towards hell, "a little outside."

"Why," exclaimed one, "that is the road we have been travelling."

"Hush, hush," whispered the others, "don't you see where it leads to? pretend we don't know it."

"If the WILL is such a tremendous force," they remarked, after a pause, "we should think it would break the cross, which appears to be very frail."

"No, no," answered St. Peter, with a sad smile; "the cross is made of *lignum vitæ:* it is a gift of the Israelites.

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It is rather the WILL that is always in danger of giving way and jumping off the track; then the cross rises, and the Bark descends, and unless the WILL springs back again on the track in time, the whole ship is in danger of being submerged. I am not now speaking of my own Bark, but of the one you might possess, for there is no power on earth or in hell that can sink my ship. Yours would resemble mine in everything else. Still, if you always kept yours attached to mine it could never sink, for mine is strong enough to keep above water whatever is attached to it."

"But how is this locomotive, the WILL, regulated?" they inquired; "and how do you manage to get up the steam?"

"It is regulated," said St. Peter, "by PIETY, FORTITUDE, and the FEAR OF THE LORD. It is heated by the fire of DIVINE LOVE, and ZEAL is the steam."

"I wish you could show them to us," said they, "that we may believe."

"Very easily," replied St. Peter, "for here they are. PIETY is that soft azure haze you see floating about you, almost imperceptible to the gaze. You might think it ephemeral, but it is not, and its influence is distinctly felt in every part of the ship. It prevents the sails from becoming hard and crisp, and acts especially on the WILL, because it lubricates its hinges, and smooths its different parts, so that they do not creak and grate on our neighbours' ears whenever it presses down on the cross. FORTITUDE you will find in the rudder; it tempers the whole machine, and toughens it to such an extent that it could run through a cliff without getting scratched. The brakeman is the FEAR OF THE LORD, a big giant-

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like man, who lies in the bottom of the ship, and carries a switch in his hand."

"Where is his flag?" they asked.

"There it is," answered St. Peter, "waving over the top of the mast. It is REVERENCE, and its staff is RESPECT, the FEAR OF THE LORD'S cane. You see that its colours are white and yellow."

"Whose gift was that?" they inquired.

"It is the gift of the Lord, and is the swaddling cloth in which He was wrapped at the time of His birth, and the angels wrote on it in letters of gold, 'Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth to all men of good will.' That is the origin of my colours."

"But what service can it be to the FEAR OF THE LORD up there if his duties lie in the bottom of the ship?"

"His duties," said St. Peter, "are not at all confined to the bottom of the ship: he has plenty to do in every part of it. He reposes in the bottom of it, because his cell is there, but he is frequently obliged to climb to the top of the mast, on the ladder of SKILL, the rounds of which are made of DEXTERITY; and when it storms, or there is a blustering wind, he ties the flag around his neck and makes it his COMFORTER, and keeps his equilibrium holding on to his switch, and leaning on the staff by RESPECT."

"He takes good care of himself," they said.

"Yes," replied St. Peter, "for he is a very cautious individual, and it is just such a brakeman that is required here."

"Where, holy Father, is your engineer? You must require a very skilful one to run a locomotive like that of the WILL on such a narrow track."

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"Our engineer," said St. Peter, "is CONSCIENCE, a little nervous, sensitive monitor, who has the upper hand of us here, and rules every one on the ship. She carries in her hand a sharp stick, with which she punches us every time we run the WILL off the track."

"Humph," said they, "it is a wonder you don't pitch the brat overboard."

"We cannot," replied St. Peter, "for she is attached to the ship, and has made herself its mistress, and we are obliged to keep her. The truth is, we are all afraid of her, and in order to keep PEACE and JOY on board, we must let her have her own way, for if she sees that we have the slightest intention of yielding to our inclinations when they conflict with her wishes, she will bind us so tightly that we can't get away."

"Why, we all have a CONSCIENCE," said they, "and she never played us any such pranks."

"She must be very ill, then," said St. Peter, "and you must have drugged her and put her to sleep, or she may have been badly brought up."

"But who brought her up for you?" they inquired.

"She was trained on my Bark," said St. Peter, "for my ship is a man-of-war, and a school for CONSCIENCE."

"Well, then," they observed, "you should not complain."

"I do not complain," answered St. Peter, "and am perfectly willing to submit to her sway."

They then observed that St. Peter had shackles on, which he was evidently afraid to break. They were going to allude to them, which St. Peter no sooner observed than he changed the conversation, and let it run on the WILL again.

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"You see," he remarked, "that CONSCIENCE and the FEAR OF THE LORD regulate the locomotive when it is inclined to go zigzag or rush along too fast, for without them it would be in constant danger of jumping off the track."

"But what prevents the locomotive from running back?" they asked.

"This brick," replied St. Peter. And he held up FIRMNESS, so that they might get a good look at it. "This brick should be put behind the wheels to prevent their running back: it is held by cohesive attraction on the track." Then turning to the mast, he added, "These three triangular sails unite us to the Deity. The mast can be truly called the WORD OF GOD, for through it beams the divine light that comes from above; the glare is softened by the olive branch, whose twigs and leaves wind themselves around the mast until they reach the top of it, where it serves as a bond betwixt the Father and the Son, and it unites Them indissolubly."

"Do you mean to tell us," they exclaimed, "that the mast is a figure of Christ?"

"A most perfect figure," replied St. Peter, "and when you fully comprehend it you will then understand that it possesses all the inherent qualities of the Godhead, and you have only to glance at it to be able to see that it is the centre of all UNITY." While they were examining it St. Peter continued, "When a man has linked his destiny to my Bark, and is determined to remain on board in spite of the devils, who raise adverse winds to try to blow him off, they hurl him with violence against the mast, which bruises him, it is true, but it does not harm him; on the contrary, it toughens and strengthens him, the same as

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gymnastic exercises do an athlete. But if he gets weary and lazy, and doubts, and refuses to hold on to the anchor's rope, or to cling to the sails, and to cry to God for help, instead of being hurled against the mast, he is blown off the deck, and dashed by the waves under the keel of the ship, where the mast presses down upon him, and grinds him to powder."

Upon hearing those words they got frightened at the prospect, and acted as if they were about to leave. St. Peter, observing their trepidation, pointed to the broad road on which they had been travelling, and told them that God had given them all a FREE WILL, and they were at liberty to choose for themselves. They no sooner caught another glimpse of the place to which the broad road led, than they concluded to remain where they were, in spite of the dreary prospect ahead.

"To give us a FREE WILL," one of them observed, "is all very fine, but why did not God give us all the other gifts at the same time?"

"He retained them," said St. Peter, "to let you have the merit of obtaining them."

"But it appears," they rejoined, "that the WILL is a dangerous machine to possess without those other gifts, for if it jump off the track there is a danger of the whole ship going down."

"That need not discourage you," said St. Peter, "as the condition of obtaining those gifts is very easy, since all we have to do is to ask for them, and keep asking for them until we get them. The importunate widow and the troublesome neighbour, spoken of in the Gospel, are your models to follow."

As they were two characters whom none of them ad-

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mired, St. Peter's words, instead of pacifying them, put them all in a bad humour. Without appearing to notice it, the Pontiff continued:

"The sail of FAITH is perfected by being attached to its mast, WISDOM, and it is held in shape by its bordering, UNDERSTANDING, and being attached to SCIENCE or KNOWLEDGE, which two latter we call the eyes of the Bark."

"But please to tell us," they asked, "why KNOWLEDGE, or SCIENCE, as you choose to term it, holds a position on your Bark, where those who sail on it cannot perceive it."

"It is no more necessary," replied St. Peter, "for you to see it than it is for you to see your WILL in order to use it, or to behold your eyes either in order to see with them. KNOWLEDGE or SCIENCE is placed on my Bark just where it should be, for by it we perceive what is passing in the world, and it communicates its conceptions to the borders of the sails, UNDERSTANDING, that convey them to WISDOM, the mast, that takes possession of them and retains them. For WISDOM, UNDERSTANDING, and KNOWLEDGE, have the same effect upon the sails as PIETY, FORTITUDE, and the FEAR OF THE LORD have upon the WILL: they serve to make the sails work well."

St. Peter then showed them his compass, which was the gift of COUNSEL. They all admired it, and wished they had one like it.

"What light do you use in the night to steer by?" they eagerly inquired.

"The light that comes from the sail of FAITH," replied St. Peter.

They were curious to know why he did not use the lantern that they saw tied to the prow. "Why not bring it over here," they said, "and hold it so that it will shine

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on the compass? for it seems to us that you can see much better by it than you can by a light that appears to be reflected as it were from a cloud."

"My friends," answered St. Peter, "that lantern is REASON: we always leave it in its place, where it does very well, but it would be sure to lead us astray if we had nothing but its light to depend upon at the helm. The wind is too strong here, which would prevent it giving a good light, for its wick is very unsteady, and it might go out at the very moment we needed it most. We require at the helm an unquenchable light to see by, one that can be relied upon in all kinds of weather."

"But do those lights we see shining everywhere never go out?"

"Never," said St. Peter; "but they are frequently withdrawn, as if they were veiled by the wings of the Dove. We are then in what we call our spiritual night. The light that comes from the sail of FAITH is thrown on the cross, and from the cross is reflected back on the tiller of SUPERNATURAL PRUDENCE, which is an excellent light to steer by, it never deceives us, however dimly it may shine, for you see it receives its light from the sail of FAITH, which light reflects upon the cross, from which it is thrown back on the tiller, that becomes as it were a second reflector, and I hold my compass by that light to steer by. But all these lights, as they shine through the gifts, come from the Dove, the source of all heat and light. Even REASON, though it is placed below them all, is a part of the divine light, the same as the light of WISDOM itself; but REASON is a detached spark of the divine light, and is therefore more feeble, because there is less of it, and on account of its position, too, and the vessel

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that contains it, for it is only a lantern: the same as if you lighted a candle by an unquenchable fire; you may blow out the light of the candle, but the fire can never be extinguished. The wick of the lantern REASON is INCLINATION: it is fed by the essence of VITALITY.

"The light that shines from above is absorbed by WISDOM, by means of its prism CERTITUDE, and thence conveyed to the other gifts in proportion to their fitness to receive it. These gifts can be compared to crystal globes, that must be kept clean and bright if you wish the light to shine clearly through them; and in order that that light may not dazzle our sight, it is always veiled from us here below, for to behold that light in all its fulness would be like seeing God face to face. As we see it shining through the sail of FAITH, it is to us as if it beamed through a deep azure cloud, or were peering through a piece of dark blue crape; through the UNDERSTANDING it is softened by the gems of TEMPERANCE; through WISDOM it is shaded by the olive branch, that should never be neglected and allowed to die; and through the sail of HOPE the light you see is variegated, as in a kaleidescope, that portrays an anchor in the centre of the sail."

None of them were pleased with this explanation of the lights, because St. Peter assigned to REASON the last place on the ship, and it was the only light that they had ever made use of or had any faith in.

St. Peter, hoping to convince them, continued, "I do not decry the light of REASON in the least; and to prove to you that it is held in great estimation on the ship, if its light is blown out, the other lights become useless, for that lantern is just as necessary for the preservation of the ship as the sun itself. *I mean the ship that I pro-*

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pose you should build, with the help of grace, for yourselves, for, as I have already said, nothing can injure or sink my ship. Always using the light of REASON in preference to the other lights I speak of, would be like taking a lantern at midday to find your way when you have the sun to see by. That dazzling light you see encircling the top of the mast, like a lustrous crown, is an emblem of GLORY: it is a gift of the Trinity."

In advancing towards the prow to take another look at the lantern, they chanced to look in the glass that was fastened to the mast, but none of them took a second glance, for they saw some horrid-looking creatures in it, without suspecting who they were. St. Peter drew their attention from it, for he knew that they were in no condition then to look in it with satisfaction to either God or themselves. So he brought out the lambkin JOY, which had hid itself beneath the olive branch, for it recoiled at the very sight of them, while the cat with nine tails began shaking them defiantly. They no sooner caught a glimpse of it than they shrank from it as they would from a tiger, without caring to know what it was good for. But when they beheld JOY, they began imitating its gait, and tried to skip about on the deck, but they only made a few steps before they were down on their backs, and were on the point of cursing such a smooth deck.

"I expected," observed St. Peter, "the deck was what you would appreciate the least, particularly if you were obliged to keep it clean."

"But how do you manage to keep it so smooth and bright?" they asked.

"We are obliged to go down on our knees," replied St. Peter, "and wash it with our tears, and wipe it with our

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brows; and the world kicking us around upon it, puts the polish on."

Not caring to hear more about that, they went strolling about, reading the inscriptions on the Bark, which they all declared were the most beautiful ones they had ever beheld.

"You cannot but admire them," said St. Peter, "for the inscriptions are the BEATITUDES, and they are to my Bark what the painting is to the canvas, the polish to the gem, the statue to the rough stone, or the perfume to the rose. Without the BEATITUDES my Bark would be exquisite only for its symmetry, but totally bereft of its ravishing beauty."

The one engraved on the compass was, "Blessed are the merciful." On the borders of the sails was written, by the gems of TEMPERANCE, "Blessed are the clean of heart." On the mast the letters of the BEATITUDE were formed by the leaves of the olive branch, which were, "Blessed are the peacemakers." But the one they admired most was that floating in the air, like a diadem over the sails. The letters appeared to be formed by an azure haze, and constantly changed colour, like the opal. It was, "Blessed are the meek." The inscription on the rudder could be distinctly seen, for the water was clear and the sky serene. It was, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after JUSTICE."

"There is one also," said St. Peter, "engraved on the clamps to which the sails of FAITH and HOPE are tacked. It is, 'Blessed are they that mourn.'"

In looking over the side of the ship, trying to see it, they caught sight of the last inscription, traced as if by the rays of the sun, and forming a halo around the ship's

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hull in the haven of DETACHMENT. It was, "Blessed are the poor in spirit."

While gazing on the BEATITUDES, their beauty more than captivated the sight, for the words seemed to speak to their hearts the sense which they were intended to convey. At length, becoming weary, they asked St. Peter if they would be permitted to sit down in his presence.

"Certainly," he said, "if you can find a seat. The only thing resembling one on the ship is JUSTICE, the anchor's shaft. Still, if you can make yourselves sufficiently small and supple, you can climb the mast and nestle on CERTITUDE; but the light is so strong there that you have to either close your eyes or always look down on the deck."

They shook their heads, and sat down on the anchor's shaft, but soon complained that it was hard and had no back.

"Still," said St. Peter, "you will find that there is no danger of it tipping over or breaking down, for it shoots through the mast, which keeps it steady and holds it fast. But there is MERCY, the anchor's arms; when you are weary you are always at liberty to lean upon them: you will find them close to the helm. You can also lean against the mast, but to do so you must nestle in the olive branch."

"But have you no berths?" they asked.

"Yes," answered St. Peter, as he pointed to the cross; "we all have a very narrow one."

"Humph," they murmured, "if we fell asleep on that we should surely roll off."

"There is not the slightest danger of your rolling off,"

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replied St. Peter, "if you will let yourselves be nailed on."

At those words they contracted their brows and turned away from it, and began admiring the rigging, which appeared to them to be only a wreath of roses of the most delicious fragrance, which they supposed had been placed there in honour of their visit. But looking upwards, they caught a glimpse of the girdle that was clasped around the mast, and they all began to covet it and wish it belonged to them. St. Peter saw that they had a mind to steal it, and to draw their attention from it he took them to the helm, and showed them the pivot on which the wheel ran.

"That pivot or axletree," said he, "is PATIENCE, and the wheel that runs on it is PERSEVERANCE, which you see is turned by its spokes, that are made out of CONSTANCY. They are fastened in the nave of FIDELITY."

Catching sight of the cross again, they started back without giving him time to finish.

"How do you manage, holy Father," said they, "to keep your Bark so warm? We have none of us felt cold since we came on board."

"My Bark is heated," replied St. Peter, "by CHARITY, which is divine electricity. It expands itself in those flames that you see issuing from the stern; it thrills us, too, when it warms us."

"Electricity!" they exclaimed; "that is a great thing to have on board. Where is your galvanic battery?"

"Here it is," said St. Peter, taking up the anchor's rope, and putting it in their hands. "It is LONGANIMITY. Instead of giving you a shock that forces you to drop it the instant you take hold of it, the longer you hold on to

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it the longer you can, for it has a power of fusing into you FORBEARANCE and continued strength. It is wound around the binnacle, the pillar of MORTIFICATION, where its end usually lies."

Here St. Peter heaved a deep sigh, for the end of that rope reminded him that to it had been tied the ass on which our Lord rode in triumph through Jerusalem, and that the spot where he then stood was its place on the Bark. But his enemies had stolen it, and he did not know where it was. The ass is the emblem of TOIL, its head is the figure of MEEKNESS, and its tail is the type of MERRIMENT. St. Peter made no allusion to its absence, and continued to describe his ship as if no bitter recollection had just rent his breast.

Said he, "When we want to use this rope to telegraph to heaven, we tie it to the end of the cross over there, where you see that mystical chain, which is the celestial telegraph."

They were all startled at those words. "What!" they one and all exclaimed, "have you a telegraph on board?"

"Certainly we have," said St. Peter. "Do you see those little balls that look like beads strung on a wire? Well, those balls are my ship's silent oars: they break the force of the waves when they come dashing against my Bark; but the wire that you see passing through them is the celestial telegraph wire. When we get into difficulty, and want speedy relief, we send our despatches right to heaven upon it."

"Well," said they, "we admire that more than anything else, for we can see the use of it. Is that, too, a gift of the Jews?"

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"No, indeed," St. Peter quickly replied; "it is a gift of the Mother of God."

They were struck dumb with surprise, for none of them suspected that she could do so much as that for mankind.

"Did she ever give you anything else?" they asked.

"A great many things," answered St. Peter. "She gave us a coat of mail, which we wear under our robes, and it renders us invulnerable against the attacks of hell when we are fighting like Christian soldiers."

They were all curious to see it, and begged him to show it to them.

"It is an armour," replied St. Peter, "that I am not ashamed of." Saying which, he opened his vest, and showed them the scapular that protected his breast.

"Perhaps that is the reason," they queried among themselves, "that he has lived so long." Then, turning to him with a beseeching look, they said, "Pray tell us, holy Father, when and where you began."

"It was understood," St. Peter replied, "that we should drop that question for the present, and try to find out where you are going to end."

"What is that glittering ensign we see at the prow?"

"That," replied St. Peter, "is the foremost standard on my Bark, and the one dearest to our hearts. Its streamer is the inscription that was written by Pilate, and placed over the head of our Saviour on the cross. On it is written the name of Jesus, to which every knee must bow. It is the symbol of VICTORY, and the staff to which it is attached is INDEPENDENCE, which can only be gained by enlisting in His service; and the glistening ball clenched by an eagle, that caps the ensign, is a figure of

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the world, and a symbol of PATRIOTISM and LOYALTY. Around it is hung a laurel wreath, the emblem of IMMORTALITY: it should always be placed at the prow, and held by the anchor's ring, the figure of ETERNITY."

Their attention was then drawn to a beautiful banner on which was inscribed, "LOVE ONE ANOTHER."

"That banner," said St. Peter, "is the Blessed Virgin's apron; her image is impressed on the side that touched her form, and the Infant Jesus left His likeness on the side He laid upon. It is the symbol of CLEANLINESS, and is difficult to obtain, because it is only awarded to the clean of heart. The staffs that support it are HONESTY and SOBRIETY, and those little cords which fasten them to CLEANLINESS are TACT: they were the Blessed Virgin's sandal laces, and the laces, too, with which she fastened the body of her dress, which is the emblem of PROTECTION. It is that canopy you see closed. It is leaning against the mast. We use it in our processions: it reminds us of the protection of the Blessed Virgin."

"She must have had SUCCESS," they remarked.

"Very true," replied St. Peter, "and she always kept SUCCESS, too, in its proper place."

"What!" they exclaimed, "is SUCCESS, too, one of her gifts; and is he on the ship?"

"Yes," said St. Peter, "but not on deck, for SUCCESS is a gay little kid that should always be kept down by the FEAR OF THE LORD, in the bottom of the ship."

"But what harm could he do if he came on deck?"

"Harm!" answered St. Peter, as he showed them a neat little illustrated diary, the symbol of MEMORY. "He would be nibbling the leaves of this little book and chewing them up, or pealing the bark off the olive branch and

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nipping off its buds; and when his horns began to grow he would rub them on the deck, and it would be all scratched; and as he got stronger he would be bumping everything over, and MODESTY'S mirror would soon be smashed; and he would knock down the monitor, CONSCIENCE, bite off the point of her stick, and would be constantly teazing the cat, and ripping into the sails, or trying to climb the mast by bracing its feet in the olive branch; and the higher he got, the more presumptuous he would get, until he reached the top, where he would try to knock down the Dove, so as to take its place. For nothing can equal the presumption and pride that lies in SUCCESS, and his sensuality would be too disgusting to look upon. SUCCESS must be kept down, and never permitted to come on deck, for we might as well have a double loaded howitzer pointing towards us at every step."

The thoughts of SUCCESS amused them, and it appeared to them then the most desirable thing to be obtained on the ship, and hoping to get hold of it by stealth, they begged St. Peter to show them where it was kept.

"I can describe the place to you," he said, "but to go there is a privilege accorded only to the chosen few, and to get there quickly they usually go by some extraordinary way. The entrance to the extraordinary way is by this spring, for the ordinary way to enter the interior of my Bark, in order to reach the FEAR OF THE LORD'S cell, is by the little door at my feet, which is the hatchway to the ship, and is an emblem of FREEDOM; for none but souls who are freed from the galling chains of concupiscence can ever pass it, and the door must be unlocked by me, or by some one to whom I have given permission to use my keys, which mean ABSOLUTION, and before the door can be

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unlocked for them they must be washed with this sponge, the symbol of FORGIVENESS; it is attached to a reed, the type of our FRAILTY. It is the sponge that touched the lips of our Lord, and that is one reason forgiveness is so sweet. The hinges of the door of FREEDOM are represented by CONFESSION, because FREEDOM hangs or depends on it. But not every one who enters the interior of the Bark by this door finds the cell of the FEAR OF THE LORD, for it is hidden in one of the most secluded recesses in the Bark, and requires a great deal of courage, patience, and strength to reach it."

"But show us a short cut to it," they urged.

"I assure you it is not in my power," said St. Peter; "I can only describe one of the ways to it, for there are as many ways to it as there are souls to be saved, and no two souls are ever led to it the same way. But the conditions for reaching it are always the same, GOOD WILL, CONTRITION, CHARITY, PERSEVERANCE, and other qualifications too numerous to name, when a soul is divested of everything."

"Must it be naked?" they inquired, interrupting him.

"It should endeavour to retain the vesture of DECORUM, which is the vesture woven without seam, and taken off our Lord by force, and lots were cast for it under the shadow of the cross, because it is so exquisite a thing that even the soldiers admired it so that they took their chances of winning it whole. When you are divested of everything that binds you to this earth, and are wearied with the toil and heat of the day, and you come to this spring to meditate and pray, and refresh yourself with its waters, you may have to linger by its mouth for years before it opens wide enough for you to drink or plunge

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into it. Those years of expectancy seem like ages, because everything that surrounds this spring is dry and arid, and you might languish and faint had you not this chalice, out of which you can drink."

St. Peter then picked up the cup of SORROW, which lay by the spring, and was always full.

"Whose gift is that?" they inquired.

"It is the gift of human beings, and contains the vinegar that was given to our Lord to drink. But when they wrung the sponge into it after it touched His sacred lips, it became a soothing and strengthening beverage for those who are languishing here. And while you are waiting you must be on the alert, as were those who used to wait by the pool of Bethsaida, and when the spring opens you must plunge quickly in, for it soon closes again, and you then find yourself enveloped in the darkest night; yet you are not afraid, for you are so inebriated that you rather dread the light lest it might deprive you of the rapturous delight that you experience in every fibre of your being, for having tasted and bathed in those vivifying waters, which then bear you gently, gently downward, as if they sought a couch to lay you on to rest, that you may regain your bewildered senses that for a moment you have lost; when suddenly you start, as if awakened from a trance or some ravishing spell, and you find yourself in a garden, by the cell in which the FEAR OF THE LORD dwells. It is the sepulchre wherein our Lord was laid, and is the symbol of ANNIHILATION of self, which must take place before we can be united to Him. But to enter there requires great COURAGE, PERSEVERANCE, PATIENCE, HOPE, and FAITH, for the stone at the door must be rolled away, you cannot do it yourself; and you have the guard

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there to oppose you that the Gentiles placed by the tomb of our Lord, to prevent His friends getting into the sepulchre and stealing Him away."

"But the guard went to sleep," the philosophers interposed.

"That is a lie invented by the Jews," St. Peter quickly replied. "Whoever before heard of Roman soldiers sleeping when on duty? Indeed they were awake, and that guard remains with us to this day. They were good Roman characters, and left their individual traits portrayed in the animals you will find in the garden, for they are the FEAR OF THE LORD'S pets. They represent our natural characteristics and inclinations, which we always retain, and by which we can gain great merit by letting the FEAR OF THE LORD keep them in their proper place, for they should always be kept in the bottom of the ship, by his cell. You will find there the little cony of CONTENTMENT, that lies near the gazelle of MIRTH, around which is frolicking the gay kid of SUCCESS, that is usually close to the fox of SAGACITY, fastened to the column of JUDGMENT by the chain of CONTINUITY, where a cunning little weasel is concealed, symbolic of ACUTENESS."

"We hope," said the philosophers, "that you don't always keep the fox down there."

"It is where he should be kept," said St. Peter, "for when he comes on deck he soon degenerates into cunning and subtlety, and would devour the lambkin of JOY in a trice, and the Dove, too, were it not beyond his reach, for he would soon believe that his capacity was sufficient to guide the ship: so we have to keep him chained in the bottom of it. Even Locke, one of your philosophers, tells you that SAGACITY finds out the intermediate ideas, to

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discover what connection there is in each link of the chain, and it performs its duties faithfully when it is kept down there."

"But you might let the gazelle come up here," said they.

"Indeed not," replied St. Peter, "for he would soon become a reindeer, and change into hilarity or jollity, and we want no such boisterousness on the ship. Close to the fox is the mastiff of suspicious ATTENTION. He is fastened to the beam of SECURITY, to keep him in the kennel of SAFETY, or he would be prowling about the ship instead of being at his post, for he is there to keep the guard awake, and he worries the soul, too, who is trying to get in the cell, otherwise it might go to sleep, as I once did myself."

"But what is he tied with?" they asked.

"With the cord of AFFECTION, which is a silken cord with a tassel at each end, and is a symbol of DEPENDENCE; one of the most durable bonds that can be had."

"How we would like to see it," the philosophers said.

"It is not necessary to go down into the bottom of my ship for that," returned St. Peter, "for you can find plenty of cords on deck. Some of them, however, are invisible."

St. Peter then got his microscope, the gift of IMAGINATION, which he usually kept locked up, and with it he showed them the cords of OBEDIENCE, that were the finest on the ship. They were so thin that they could not be seen by the naked eye.

"It is by these cords," said St. Peter, "that my children are fastened to my Bark, and notwithstanding they are invisible, they are so strong that we can safely say that they are indissoluble, for they can only be broken by

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the engine force of the WILL. The cords of AFFECTION also fasten the banner to its staffs, for notwithstanding it is attached to them in several parts by the cords of TACT, yet they are not strong enough, because CLEANLINESS should be firmly united to HONESTY and SOBRIETY."

"Whose gifts are those cords?" they asked.

"They are also a gift of the Mother of God. The cords of TACT she fastened her clothes with, but the cords of AFFECTION were the leading strings with which she supported our Lord when He began to walk; and I wish my children to always feel that they are in a state of dependence and pupilage, and I even make my bishops wear them on their hats and around their waists, to denote their dependence on me for guidance, and I always wear them, too, to show my dependence on the Holy Spirit, and the help I hope to receive from the Mother of God."

They then observed beside the banner a glistening spear, to which a waving streamer was attached.

"That," said St. Peter, "is another of our ensigns. It is the spear that pierced the Heart of the Man-God, and made this spring. Its handle denotes TRIUMPH, its point is COMPUNCTION, and its streamer is the symbol of COMMAND. On it is a Grecian cross, around which is inscribed, 'Whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do you also to them.' That streamer is the napkin that was wrapped around the face of our Lord in the sepulchre. It is a precious gift, and is given to enable us to govern ourselves. It is awarded to those who are kind to the dead."

"But how can we get into the sepulchre where the FEAR OF THE LORD dwells?" they inquired.

"Ah, that is very difficult, but we have our Lord's words to encourage us, for He told us that if we asked we

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should receive, if we sought we should find, and if we knocked it should be opened unto us; and we sometimes ask until our voice becomes extinct, and we often seek until our eyes grow dim, and we knock and knock until our fingers ache; but we should not heed the fatigue or the pain, but keep knocking and seeking to see if there is any possibility of moving the stone; and we sometimes wonder why it should remain there till this day, when we discover that it is the stone of PERSECUTION that was hurled at our Lord, hoping to crush Him. On it is inscribed the last Beatitude, 'Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.' It is a gift of His enemies, but it renders us good service by exercising our faith and all our other virtues, and by trying to lift it it makes us tough and strong, and convinces us of our weakness, and that we must look to heaven for help, as we can expect nothing but opposition from man, and from our natural inclinations, yet we must not yield to them or despair.

"While we are beseeching, seeking, and knocking, we feel ourselves regaled by an odour of great sweetness, that seems to issue from the tomb, and acts upon our senses as if it were sent to calm our breathless impatience to be let in. It is the odour from the spices that embalmed the body of our Lord, and was brought in the vessel of RESIGNATION, which is a solid vase that can stand the flames of DEVOTION, and when it is heated the spices exhale that perfume which impregnates the interior of my Bark. But you must not stop to admire the vase, or distract your mind by inhaling the balmy sweetness of the air, or let yourself be caught by the fox, or play with the kid, or amused by the gazelle, or annoyed by the barking of the

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dog, or trying to catch the weasel asleep; but you must persevere, and diligently seek to be let in, and then you will discover a little jar of ointment that was brought to anoint our Lord's body. It is COMFORT, and a gift of His friends. You take some, and rub it on your bleeding hands, for you have nearly knocked the knuckles through the flesh. But you do not stop for that, but keep knocking louder and louder, while you cry, 'Let me in, Lord! let me in!'

"As the night becomes more chilly, for the dews there fall heavily, and the air becomes denser and thicker than you have ever known it to be before, you wonder what that black vapour means, when by dint of seeking you discover it is the DESOLATION our Lord experienced, one of the gifts of nature, and is known in the spiritual life as the devil's day: he is always revelling in it with his snuff-box, rope, and sieve, trying to discourage you by sifting you thoroughly. The wires of his sieve are made of anxieties and perplexities, and the rim that fastens them is perturbation, and being round, it appears like ETERNITY, having no end. His rope is iniquity, the devil's swing, and he tries to entice people in it, by making them believe that by tying it about their necks they will soon forget everything; and with comic gravity and a suppressed smile of mockery he offers you a pinch of his snuff. It is arsenic, the symbol of despair, the soul's worst poison. It is held in the leaden box of antipathy, that he sometimes suspends to your heart, all of which renders that darkness appalling. Notwithstanding the terrors and horrors attending that opaque darkness, through it a bright star is beaming that cannot be concealed: it is the star of MEDITATION, and was presented

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to us at the birth of our Saviour, as one of the rarest gifts of God. It is the symbol of our GUIDE, and one of the types of the Blessed Virgin. That star is the only light gleaming while the terrified soul is shivering, seeking, beseeching, and knocking to be let in; and as the star comes nearer, its radiant beams gradually chase away the desolation and the gloom; the devil then hides himself, so as not to be exposed. Looking around, you behold a shroud that you quickly seize, because the devil and his followers have wrested from you the vestment woven without seam, and you wrap the shroud about you, for it is the emblem of OBLIVION, or forgetfulness of self, and the injuries others may have done you. You no sooner wrap it about you than you forget aught else but your ardent desire to enter the tomb; you have then become oblivious to the distractions around you, and invulnerable to the wiles of Satan; you press nearer to the wall of the sepulchre, expecting every moment that the stone will be removed. By the light of that star you perceive the stone is fastened to the tomb by a seal, and the heraldic delineations emblazoned upon it denote that it represents the PRIDE OF LIFE, which must be broken before you can enter the sepulchre. Alas! it is one of the most difficult things to do, for its substance is so hard and sharp, that in trying to break it you sometimes cut your hands through and through. It is a gift of Satan, presented by the Gentiles, to prevent souls entering the tomb; but we can make it a means of acquiring merit: and nothing daunted by the agony it has caused you, you look around you, hoping to find a weapon strong enough to break it, when you behold a lamp filled with oil of sweet almonds, that represents MANSUETUDE; its

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wick is SELF-DIFFIDENCE. It was brought by the Saviour's friends when they laid Him in the tomb. That lamp is not lighted, and you feel the fault is your own, and you search for a flint to strike a flame with, when you see lying on the ground the precious box of SYMPATHY that our Lord's friends brought with them, too; it is filled with ashes, typical of MOURNING. You no sooner touch it than you perceive it is made of the magnet of TRUTH. You instantly seize it, and strike it on the wall of the tomb, which is the emblem of the promise that has been given us, and can never be broken or fail. As you strike it, the sparks that fly from it light the lamp, which gives a most exquisite blaze, and a most delicious warmth; its heat dilates with joy every fibre of your heart, and well it may, for that flame signifies LOVE, the purest of love, love for our enemies, inspired by the love and fear of God; and the light it sheds is the light of true LIBERTY, which is only possessed by the children of God, and one of the rarest gifts to obtain, for it comes directly from the Spirit of God.

"You then take that light of LIBERTY and love, and hold it close to the seal of the PRIDE OF LIFE, and it melts at its touch, and the stone quickly rolls away, as if it had been suspended to the door by that seal, and had been hanging over an inclined plane. You then carefully hold your hand before that light, lest Satan and Licence, that reign in the blasts of the night, should blow it out, for you feel it is your right of admission to enter the sepulchre. You press your lips to the door, and softly breathe the name of your Beloved, for an angel has whispered to you that the Lord is anxiously waiting there to receive you.

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"The stillness is so great that the wild beatings of your heart seem to clamour louder to be let in than all your knocking and beseeching, for they seem to jar the whole sepulchre as you press your form closer and closer to its entrance, which is the symbol of SILENCE, and a gentle tremor shakes your frame as the door softly opens, and you find yourself surrounded by a flood of streaming light: you are so ravished with the beatific sight that you nearly swoon with delight. The door is then closed, and you are hidden from the world and everything it possesses."

Here St. Peter paused, and the philosophers anxiously inquired, "And what then?"

"Ah," replied St. Peter, trying to recollect himself, "that is the SECRET OF THE KING. It is too inexpressibly sweet and sacred to ever be revealed."

"I think your Holiness," added one of the philosophers, "must have that flint about you, for you have actually drawn our hearts to your Bark, that were steeled against it before you began showing it to us."

St. Peter smiled as he took the magnet from his bosom.

"Why, holy Father," they exclaimed, "that is your snuff box."

"Yes," said St. Peter, "SYMPATHY is the snuff box in the spiritual life; it should always be filled with ashes, typical of MOURNING."

"What is that little silver casket, holy Father, you just had in your hand: it looks like a vinaigrette?"

"It is the little casket of REFINEMENT," said St. Peter; "it is filled with salt, the emblem of TASTE; it is closely allied to DISCERNMENT, so I always carry it with my spectacles, which is the gift of DISCERNMENT."

"Have you no WIT in your Bark, holy Father?"

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"Yes," replied St. Peter, "but we use it sparingly, for WIT is the smelling salts in the spiritual life. It helps to revive us when we are fatigued."

"Where is your fishing line, and what bait do you use?"

"My fishing line is my COURSE," said St. Peter, "and my bait is the magnet of TRUTH. It is the very best bait that can be found."

They had become a little distracted in their thoughts, and St. Peter let them handle his snuff box as much as they liked, and use its contents, too, when one of them remarked, "How did it occur that we happened to branch off on the sepulchre? why did we go to it?"

"You wanted me," said St. Peter, "to show you where SUCCESS was kept."

"Very true," they replied; "we had forgotten all about it."

"You did well," said St. Peter, "SUCCESS is of no importance, and not worth remembering or seeking. The only thing of importance in this life is to die to ourselves, and be buried with the Lord, for then we shall surely rise with Him."

"But that star pleased us most of all," said they, "and it seemed so natural it should be there to drive away the devil and his day. God was good to send it to the wise men."

"Yes," rejoined St. Peter, "and it is the wise men who have been following it ever since. It is one of the best images of the Blessed Virgin."

"Then tell us something more about the Blessed Virgin; we expected your Bark would be filled with statues of her, and all we have seen or heard about her is that star; and what you call her gifts."

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"If you have not seen more of her here," answered St. Peter, "it is because you do not understand my Bark, for the hull is composed of the Hearts of Mary and her Son blended into one. The roses* you see are hers, but alas! the crown of thorns they conceal is His. There, too, is the mast, to which the sail of CHARITY is attached, like a pair of lustrous wings, for as WISDOM and CHARITY are eternal, they are thus indissolubly united. When the ship is in a storm, and the sails are untacked, (the world then pulls out the nails and puts them in my feet and hands,) the sails of FAITH and HOPE are rolled up, and become a pair of arms, for the clamps of science are shaped like two perforated hands. CHARITY'S sail is then unfolded, and is draped around the mast like a lustrous mantle. The mast then is something more than a mere figure of Christ, aye, it is Christ Himself, but the mantle with which He is adorned is Mary.

"On the top of the mast there then appears a head of great majesty, but the features can only be discerned through a deeply-tinted veil. The head is that of Christ, but the veil thrown over it is Mary. During a storm, my children, seeking shelter from the blast, hover around the mast, to which they cling as to the feet of their Saviour. But that is not enough, they require to be covered up, and they nestle beneath the downy folds of the mantle, which is Mary."

"What becomes of the crown of thorns when the ship is in a storm?" they asked.

"The world," replied St. Peter, "when it crucifies me, throws the roses at my feet, while it puts the crown of thorns upon my head, and I offer them the wreath of roses

* They are emblems of her virtues.

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in exchange for it; but my enemies wag their heads, and thrust the precious garland back, saying, 'We will not have that woman to reign over us.' Alas! they little know what they reject, for when I offer them that wreath, I offer them God's Mother, whom He gave them Himself."

"No, no," they interrupted, "the Crucified gave His Mother to John, and not to us."

"Therein you are mistaken," responded St. Peter. "Our Lord did not say to St. John, 'I give you *My* Mother,' but He said, 'Behold *your* Mother,' because she was already St. John's Mother, as she was the Mother of every Christian. If Mary is the Mother of God, and spouse of the Holy Ghost, and if God is our Father, Mary must be our Mother also."

At those words they looked at each other, a little surprised, and said to St. Peter, "We can see that by Reason now."

"These who take the Bible for their guide," continued St. Peter, "will acknowledge that the Lord said, 'I have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now, but when the Spirit of Truth is come He shall teach you all truth, and the things that are to come He shall show you.' The honour God willed should be paid to His Mother was one of those truths that the minds of men were not prepared to receive, notwithstanding our Saviour proclaimed the doctrine on the cross."

"Do you mean to say we are *obliged* to have recourse to the Blessed Virgin in order to be saved?"

St. Peter reflected a moment, and then replied, "If you were standing on the shore of a broad, fathomless, rough stream, and there was a beautiful canoe on the strand that would take you safely across, and you should ask me, Are

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we *obliged* to get into that canoe to reach the other shore? I should tell you, No, you are not *obliged* to get into it, for you might swim across."

"But we should be sure to reach the other side pretty well drenched, and run the risk of drowning."

"That is just the position and condition," interposed St. Peter, "of souls who spurn Mary's assistance and protection on their way to heaven."

They made no further objections in regard to Mary, but became thoughtful. At length one of them remarked, "We can see that Calvary is often repeated in the Papacy, with this exception, when they crucify you, instead of raising you up, they nail you to the cross with your head downwards."

"Very true," said St. Peter, "for when my Bark is tossed, my WILL as well as my body is on the cross, which raises the ship upwards, while the cross goes downwards."

"Who guides the ship," they asked, "when you are nailed to the cross? Surely in that position you cannot give orders."

"Have I not told you," replied St. Peter, "that when the sails of FAITH and HOPE are furled, and the sail of CHARITY is unfolded, the mast then is no longer a figure of Christ, but it is Christ Himself, and it is He who guides the Bark? That is the reason my Bark has always survived the storms that have swept over her; for when my enemies have done their worst, and think I am lost, is the very time my Bark rises triumphantly above the raging waters."

"We wish, St. Peter, you would put your Bark in our hands for a while."

St. Peter smiled at the very thought. "I suppose," he

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replied, "you think you can manage it better than the Lord?"

"Not in a storm," they answered, "but in calm times, when perhaps He leaves it all to you, we think we could; and you must acknowledge we prepared the world to receive you."

"I think rather," observed St. Peter, "you have been blocking up the way and preventing souls coming to me."

"Is that all the thanks we get," they exclaimed, "for our efforts to discover you, and the sacrifices we have made in order to come to see you, to try to liberate you?"

"I think," returned St. Peter, "you will be well rewarded for your sacrifices by the treasures I have in store for you when you have prepared your vessels to receive them."

Instead of answering him, they began murmuring among themselves, until St. Peter said to them, "What do you wish me to do? Do you expect me to bow down and acknowledge your allegiance and receive your orders?"

"No, no," they exclaimed, "we do not wish any such thing; all we wish of you is to permit us to go on board your ship *just as we are*, and lead you a little while."

"I see," replied St. Peter, "what you take me for; you seem to forget that I am also a man."

"And your Holiness appears to forget," they rejoined, "that were it not for us you might have to-day been in a museum instead of on the papal throne."

"I shall never thank you for that," St. Peter mournfully replied; "alas! no; but I excuse your ignorance, for I see that you do not know what it is to be seated, in these days, on the papal throne."

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"We heard," they interposed, "before we started for Rome, that you were a prisoner, and we expected to find you lying on straw, and we came here intending to release you, for we look upon you as our own."

"A prisoner I am," St. Peter rejoined, "but I have not such a luxurious bed as you suppose." Saying which, he pointed to his bed that lay near the helm, on which he reposed.

They recoiled from the sight, for, instead of a bed of straw, what did they behold but a bed of thorns.

"Whose gift is that?" they cried.

"I think you must know where it came from by its form. Since you have passed through Italy, you must have seen it before, because the nation is now obliged to carry it on its arms."

"True, true," they replied, "we know it, it is the *cross of Savoy*. They told us on the way that you were not a prisoner, that you had your liberty, and could go and come when you liked; but that you shut yourself up in the Vatican just out of spite."

"Whoever told you that," answered St. Peter, "does not believe me to be the vicar of Christ. His vicar I am, and I should represent Him here as father, priest, and king; but how can I represent Him here as a king if I am despoiled of my estates, and denied the authority and homage due to me?" They were considering what reply to make, when St. Peter, without permitting them to interrupt him, added, "I suppose you all know that the vicar of Christ does not receive his title of king from the people of Rome, for that title is just as inherent to my position as Christ's vicar as is the title of priest and father. The States of the Church belong to the Church, and

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should be held just as inviolable as the sacred vessels that are consecrated to its service, and no one can wrest them from the Church without committing sacrilege. The States of the Church do not belong to the people who inhabit them; they belong to the Church, for the Catholic world has paid for them over and over again, with the material treasures she has lavished on them, without which Rome and its environs might have been to-day a wilderness. These treasures were not given to the people: they were given to the Church to assist her in the propagation of the faith; and even though I should betray my temporal charge by an unjust administration, that would not justify the people in wresting the States of the Church from the jurisdiction of the papacy."

"How does despoiling you of your estates," they asked, "make you a prisoner?"

"The vicar of Christ," said St. Peter, "is not free to degrade the pontifical dignity. It is his duty to maintain it, if by so doing he is obliged to sacrifice his liberty or his life; I should be denying Christ's royalty if I approved the crimes of His despoilers. But I cannot approve them, for I am bound, as you see." Saying which, St. Peter showed them the chains CONSCIENCE had riveted on him. "The despoiler," he resumed, "has tried to bribe me to shake off these chains, but I can neither break them nor cast them aside, for CONSCIENCE has fastened them on me so tightly that I cannot even loosen them, so you see I am 'bound in the spirit,' and my body is obliged to be confined with it, because I refuse to deny Christ's royalty, and to represent Him here on earth as a vassal to a band of His rebellious subjects. Yet they proclaim I am free, that I can go

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and come when I like, that I only shut myself up out of spite. I am resigned to be accused falsely, to be mocked and scoffed at; He whom I represent was treated the same before me. I am resigned to their scourging, and to the prison to which they have consigned me, and to wear the crown of thorns they have pressed on my head, and to hold the reed, too, which they have forced in my hand. I am resigned to all these outrages, for I am willing to carry the cross which our Lord left behind Him, and predicted that I should bear. I should be thrusting that cross aside, and be denying my Master's royalty, as the Jews did eighteen centuries ago, if I consented to be seen in the streets of Rome carrying the cross of Savoy."

They here interposed, "We thought Christ's kingdom was to be a spiritual one, that your temporal power was an impediment to its establishment, and we believed they had rendered the Church a service in disposing of its estates."

"Yes," interrupted St. Peter, "that is what they say when they break into the churches, murder the priests, and carry off the sacred vessels. You might as well say if Christ were God, He did not require a roof to be born under, a room to eat the pasch in, or a tomb to be laid in. Christ's kingdom is a spiritual one, but in order to establish that kingdom here below it requires material aid, the same as it requires a body here on earth to contain a living soul. Behold the magnificence of Solomon's temple, which only contained a figure of Christ, yet God ordered that temple to be built, which was covered with gold and set in precious stones; do you imagine that He intended less should be done for His Son than was

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done for a mere figure of Him? On the contrary, the prophets foretold that the beginning of Christ's reign would resemble a little stone, but that it should increase in size until it was strong enough to crush and overthrow whatever opposed it, and that He should be seated on David's throne, and that the Church should be decked like a bride and a queen. How is she to appear in majesty, and reign with dignity, if sacrilegious hands tear off her diadem, strip her of her ornaments, take away her throne, and if she has not a spot of land she can call her own, and is exposed to the first band of ruffians who are strong enough to lay hands upon her, and eject her even from her prison and her home? If despoiling the Church of her estates and her rights only reached the scant territory which belongs to the Church, the crime would not be so great, but the wounds from the sacrilegious hands are felt throughout the whole Catholic world, for my despoiler throws a challenge in the face of every Roman Catholic throughout the world, and he tramples upon their rights in defiance of justice. The patience and forbearance they exhibit in the face of this glaring outrage is a living proof that the kingdom of Christ is established within us, and we are governed by the example of Him to whom we owe our allegiance."

"But as Christ does not come to your aid, holy Father, and deliver you from this scourge, does it not shake your faith?"

"My friends," replied St. Peter, "the present situation serves to confirm our faith. My despoilers are those who profess the faith, and yet are revelling in the spoils of sacrilege, which makes their crime a great deal worse than when the temples were profaned by the crimes of the

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Jews, or the bloody factions of the zealots, or the bringing in thither the ensigns and standards of the pagan Romans, for there is no crime that cries louder to heaven for vengeance than sacrilege. It was foretold that before the end of the world the abomination of desolation should be standing in the holy place. There are many of my children who believe that prediction is now fulfilled, and instead of taking up material arms to defend our rights, we do as our Lord bade us, we prepare for His coming, and we 'watch and pray.'"

"You must acknowledge, holy Father, that there has been a great improvement made here since your estates have been wrested from you, for the Italians are now famed for having the cleanest streets in the world."

"I have seen it alluded to in the foreign journals," said St. Peter, "and it has made the blood rush to my temples to know the Italians are now famed for being the best street sweepers in the world. Before they became the sport of political machinations, a poem, a statue, a painting, a design, created by some inspired Italian mind, sent a thrill of admiration and of noble emulation throughout the world. But now the pen, the palette, and the chisel are superseded by the dirt cart, the broom, and the shovel, and the world applauds the change, and calls it civilization and progress. But before you leave Italy you should visit the Italians in their homes, and see them surrounded by their families, poorly clad and scantily fed, writhing under the burden of taxes and subsidies, that the streets may be continually swept. Their songs are hushed, their hands drop heavily by their sides, for the sacred flame is smothered, their genius is chilled, the lyre, the easel, and the pencil

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lie neglected; for a people gifted by nature to delve in the region of mind, if forced to work and toil for their bread, like slaves in a mine, become crushed in spirit, and like God's people when made captive, they can no longer sing the songs of Sion when forced to grind the mills of the Chaldeans."

While St. Peter was explaining to them his position as a prisoner, their eyes were fixed on the anchor's stock. Casually lowering them, they chanced to spy the cock beyond the haven of DETACHMENT, on the confines of hell. They instantly forgot St. Peter's chains, and the reverence due to them, and assuming an air of defiance, like a crew ready to mutiny, they peremptorily demanded what he meant stowing him away in such an out of the way place.

St. Peter regretted that the question of the cock should be re-introduced at that precise moment, for whoever had hitherto tried to settle the difficulty had always, in some way or other, been scathed. Seeing no possibility, however, of evading the subject just then, he resolved to be wary, and while ignoring their rudeness, he made a plain statement of the case, and answered them as meekly as if he had been their very humble servant.

"I agree with you, gentlemen, that his worship the cock is not quite in his proper place, but I am not to blame for that: he was dragged off there by the State and her adherents, who refuse to let me have full jurisdiction over him."

The deep tone of sadness pervading St. Peter's words carried conviction with them, and calmed their resentment; so they turned to him with greater deference than they had hitherto shown him, and said, "Pardon us, St. Peter, but we always supposed you to be the cock's worst

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enemy, and when we saw him lying off there we suspected you had put him there to get him out of the way."

"*I* the cock's enemy?" returned St. Peter, with a reproachful look; "quite the reverse. I am the best friend he ever had. I am only too anxious to have him on my Bark again, for I need his services, because he is my sentry, my WATCH. God gave him understanding to know the hours of the night, and when of old he crowed them out with his shrill, clear voice, CONSCIENCE answered with him, 'All is well.' Ah, we were happy then. O, for those days to come back again!"

"Goodness gracious, holy Father," they exclaimed, "how you are maligned! All the world says that you are dying to wring his neck."

"You must indeed have thought me cruel and ungrateful to believe that I was capable of forgetting the services he rendered me in the darkest hour of my life. Did he not awaken my conscience when it lay dormant, if not dead?" Here St. Peter's voice faltered. Recovering himself, he went on, "No, indeed, I never can express to you all the affection I feel for him, or say how deeply it grieves me that he has been taken from the ship, and that men should have perverted him by giving him a position he was by no means intended to fill, for he never was meant to be the emblem of a Church, or to represent a pure and enlightened age. But as things stand, and corrupted as he now is, he is certainly a most appropriate figure to represent the spirit of the age we live in."

"It is a wonder," they observed, "that he does not topple over into hell, and have done with it, for he appears to be standing on the very edge of it."

"Oh, never fear, the devil and he are fast friends,"

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replied St. Peter, "and the devil takes good care to keep our friend the cock out of hell, because he is a capital decoy to draw innumerable souls to perdition."

"If the devil has got hold of him," they said, bridling up, "he must be made to let go of him, and if we rescue him from the devil's clutches, will you, holy Father, let him come on board?"

"Yes, if you promise me faithfully," St. Peter replied, "that you will hold him fast till I have exorcised him from crest to claws."

"And do you then really believe, holy Father, that he has a devil in him?"

"A devil in him!" exclaimed St. Peter; "aye, a whole legion of them, and I warn you before you begin, you will find it warm work holding on to the little gentleman while I am exorcising him."

Meanwhile they were deliberating how they could catch him. St. Peter proposed that they should all make a plunge into the water, and carry him off by a *coup de main*, a proposal which was instantly rejected. Not a man of them cared to get a ducking.

"Alas!" sighed St. Peter, "how on earth can you ever expect to effect a reform if you are unwilling to show a little self-sacrifice in your conduct?"

They began a system of coaxing and wheedling, by which they hoped to allure the cock to them, but he took no further notice of them than to wink knowingly at them, a piece of impertinence which set them all a cursing in a way to call for the interference of St. Peter. So for their curses they substituted a series of sermons, in which they warned the cock of the danger he was exposing himself to by refusing to come back. But St. Peter found their

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sermonizing as little to his taste as their anathemas, so he interrupted them again.

"My friends," he said, "I find little to choose between your cursing and your preaching: they both lead souls to the same destination, to wit, to hell; your cursing by a short cut, while your preaching by a more roundabout way."

"In that case," they answered, looking a little crest-fallen, "we shall have to give him up, for preaching is our only resource."

"I never expected you to be able to catch him," observed St. Peter, drily. "All I ask of you is to hold on to him until I have done with him."

"Oh, St. Peter," they cried, "if you will only catch him for us, we will hold on to him like grim death."

"I shall put your faith in me, then, to a very severe test. I promise not to kill him, but I cannot prove that to you until I am through with him, and I am afraid that at the first sacrifice you may be called upon to make, you will let him go."

"Do but make trial of us, holy Father; only pray don't ask us to get all our clothes wet."

"I make you that promise," replied St. Peter; and he quickly called up a man from the guard boat labelled A. M. D. G. In an instant up sprang a Jesuit, as nimble as a lamplighter, whom St. Peter ordered to catch the cock, and hand him over to his friends.

The Jesuit went at once to the prow to devise how it was to be done, while the philosophers, the instant they espied him, began to try their hand again, in the hope of getting hold of the cock without the Jesuit's assistance, and so to beat him, if they could, at his own game, for

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they were sure that the Jesuit would try to overreach him. They designed on a piece of paper a hen dressed up in tights, under which they wrote in large letters that she was going to dance that night in a ballet, which was to take place on the Bark. On another paper they drew two men dressed up in the same style, and wrote under them that there was to be a prize fight on board, and that it was just going to begin.

The Jesuit inquired what they were going to do with their placards.

"We are trying," they answered, "to get the devil over here, to draw him away from the cock."

"The devil does not trouble himself about such sports," said the Jesuit, "for the people who frequent that sort of amusement are already his, and he can therefore afford to leave them to their silly enjoyments, which will not last long, as he very well knows."

His hearers did not of course believe the Jesuit: they suspected he was jealous of their cleverness. But when they had hung up their posters, they saw the devil pop up his head, read them, and then lay himself down to take a nap. They then looked at the Jesuit as if to ask what the devil meant.

"Gentlemen," he said, "you cannot expect to catch the devil with lies, for they are his own bait; the best way to entrap the old thief is to tell him the truth." Saying which, he took down their placards, and wrote on the other side that there was a men's mission going on at the Gesù, and all the women were requested to try to induce their fathers, husbands, and brothers to attend.

When therefore the devil had opened his eyes, rubbed them, and read the posters, he dropped the cock as if he

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had been the hottest coal in hell, and started off at the top of his speed.

The philosophers, out of themselves, expected every moment that the cock would fly up to them. But the wide-awake old gentleman moved never a feather, stirred never a limb, but remained where the devil had dropped him. The Jesuit then took from his pocket a line, one of his own making, and told them that he thought he could draw up the cock if he had the right kind of bait, and going among them, he passed round a plate, but instead of making a full purse they all made a wry face, as one of them exclaimed, "Bah, the old story over again; you priests will never do anything without a tip."

"Well," replied the Jesuit, "if you will not contribute towards this good work we shall have to give it up, because I cannot get him up without a dollar."

After going round once more with the plate, he succeeded in squeezing out of them one hundred half-pence. One of the philosophers took the coppers, and exchanged them for an American silver dollar, which the Jesuit tied to his line, for the dollar had passed through the hands of a Jew, who, in order to get a better hold on it, had punched a hole through it.

They all wondered how he expected to catch the cock with such a thing, and to satisfy them the Jesuit said to them:

"If you wish to take any one in now a days, you have got to treat them, and the best thing to offer them is a strong sling."

Therein they all agreed with him.

"You know, however," he added, with a smile, "that we have been living for centuries behind the spirit of the

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age, which has enabled us to study his tastes and know his little ways. If I were to throw out a worm or a piece of meat as a bait, he would swallow them whole without moving from his place, but if he once gets hold of the almighty dollar, he will hold on to it, and never let it go until forced to do so, for avarice, more even than lust, is the strong passion of the age."

"Humph," they said, "to our minds the age is less covetous than those who are sailing behind it."

"You go by appearances," replied the Jesuit; "we judge from experience. Now get yourselves ready to hold him fast, so that he does not get away."

"Suppose you catch him first," they banteringly exclaimed.

"I am afraid," retorted the Jesuit, "it will be easier for me to catch him than it will be for you to hold him, for the moment you begin to fight for the right all the powers of darkness will rise up against you. Until now the devil has been letting you have your own way, but it will be so no longer if he sees you trying to hold the spirit of the age for the Church to exorcise it."

The Jesuit then ran to the prow, and threw himself down on the deck flat on his face, as he threw out his sling with as much dexterity as did the son of Isai. It dropped beside the cock's wing, making a silvery ring, which drew the cock's attention to it. He no sooner saw it than he put it in his bill, and held it so that by turning his eyes in, he could see the goddess of Liberty that was embossed upon it. He then crouched down as if he were going to kneel, when the Jesuit exclaimed:

"Behold the spirit of the age at his devotions. It possesses the almighty dollar, and its eyes are now fixed

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on the goddess of Liberty. Those are its deities, and in order to possess them, and at the same time to behold them, both of his eyes are obliged to turn in. Thus the spirit of the age and its votaries all see obliquely when they are in possession of their deities."

The philosophers were afraid to speak above a whisper, for fear of distracting the cock at his prayers, who, if he chanced to look up and see them ready to seize him, might let the dollar drop. But the Jesuit spoke in a loud voice, saying:

"Never fear, you cannot distract the spirit of the age when he is at his prayers. What a blessed thing if all Christians could be as recollected. He is now lost in contemplation, and has become oblivious to everything else. You may preach and harangue him now as much as you like, you can never distract him unless you take his deities from him."

The Jesuit then went to the centre of the Bark, and with his right arm held on to the mast. They all wondered what he meant by holding on to that.

"You know," said he, "that I have got to pull him up."

"But you are stronger than he," they rejoined.

"I am," replied the Jesuit, "when I hold on to the mast, but if I attempted to pull him up without holding on to this, instead of pulling him up, he might pull me overboard. I do not rely on myself at all; if I did I should be lost."

But they only despised him for the biggest coward they had ever set eyes on.

At that instant St. Peter came to see how they were getting on, when the Jesuit made a quick movement with his line, and the cock suddenly appeared on the anchor's

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stock, looking wholly absorbed in thought. St. Peter gave him a push with his foot that quickly woke him up, and sent him sliding on the deck. The whole school closed upon him, like a body of men determined to conquer him. The instant the cock saw that he was surrounded by a corps of resolute men, he threw himself down and made believe he was dead. St. Peter, understanding his little game, said to them:

"He is playing *'possum;* don't take your hands off him, if you do he will get away. He does not want to fight, for the spirit of the age is a coward. He will crow and strut about when there is no danger, but let him be attacked by a powerful foe, he is sure to show the white feather, for he knows nothing of that power of resistance which makes martyrs. Bring him here, and put him on the binnacle, the pillar of MORTIFICATION."

They were about to do as St. Peter bade them, and were going to remove the dial, when he told them to let it remain, as it would require TIME to finish him.

"After you have exorcised him, holy Father, where are you going to put him?" they inquired.

"Do not trouble yourselves about that for the present," replied St. Peter: "let us first get the devil out of him, and take notice of the tools I am going to use, for with these tools you can accomplish almost anything." Saying which, he set down an urn full of tools beside them.

"That is a queer thing to keep them in," they observed, "an urn full of water!"

"Which shows," resumed St. Peter, "that we must keep using them to prevent them getting rusty."

St. Peter took up the hammer of DETERMINATION, and

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knocked the cock over the head with it, which made him scream lustily.

"Oh, oh," they pityingly exclaimed, "you will kill him if you hit him like that."

"No, no," rejoined St. Peter, "I am only turning his will in the right direction, and in order to succeed it requires strong blows of determination."

But the cock's scream was like a tocsin to those who were interested in keeping the age in its present condition, for the devils instantly arose, and their number seemed so great, you would have imagined to see them that there were more on St. Peter's Bark than in hell itself. The philosophers got frightened seeing so many devils at once, and they complained that the Orders should have let them pass.

"The easiest way to get rid of them," said St. Peter, "is to despise and not notice them."

The devils began whistling, and the school turned their heads to see what kind of mouths they made, when St. Peter cried out:

"Pay attention, men, to what you are about; don't you see that the devils already have their claws on the cock? In a second more they would have carried him off. They only whistled to divert you from your work. Now hold on to him tight while I get rid of his pride, which is in his comb. Its roots must be dug up by the pick-axe of SELF-CONTEMPT, and his head must be planed off with the rough stone of SELF-ABASEMENT, until it becomes as smooth as the deck we are on."

"But, holy Father," they said, beseechingly, "if you take off his comb you will disfigure him for life."

"Never mind his looks," said St. Peter; "the age cares

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too much for appearances. It is far better off without that encumbrance, so that when it goes to war the foe will have less to seize hold of."

"They can hold on to his tail," said they.

"We must pull that out, too," St. Peter returned, "with the forceps of TENACITY, for therein lies his vanity; but his pride must be got rid of first, or the feathers in his tail would sprout out quicker than we could pull them out."

St. Peter had not given the finishing touches to pride, when the devils threw snuff in the philosophers' eyes.

"This is too much," they cried; "we give it up, we shall let go."

"You must not, you must not," St. Peter shouted. "If the devils throw their snuff in your eyes, weep it out, but never give up."

The philosophers meanwhile took a firmer hold, while St. Peter took what was left of pride, and gave it to an arch-devil that carried a basket, and was standing by his side.

The devils, seeing that St. Peter meant fair play, and was going to give them their due, seemed pacified, and as St. Peter went to work to pull out the cock's tail, and handed the feathers over to them one by one, they appeared to have as much as they could do to keep them in the basket, for a wind suddenly arose which seemed determined to blow them away.

The philosophers were so glad when the devils gave them a respite that they were going to thank them, hoping by being grateful to propitiate them. But St. Peter, suspecting what they were about, checked them.

"Never thank the devils for anything," said he. "The

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wind was sent to give them something to do, to stop them tempting you, because you resisted them. We must now attend to the cock's wings; they have spread more mischief than can be conceived. His quills are formidable weapons of offence, and have become, through the medium of the press, carabines of iniquity. I must pull them out with my fingers carefully, for to move them well requires great strength and considerable ingenuity, and delicacy of touch."

The devils all stretched out their claws, hoping St. Peter would give each of them one: but this time they were not quick enough; before they had time to wink, Father Eel had hold of them, and was carrying them off.

"The Jesuits must needs have a hand in everything," screeched out the arch-devil, who had the basket. Then, turning to the school, he said to them, very confidentially, "It is no use to run after him to try to get them from him, for when once the Jesuits get hold of anything they always hold on to it. That has been our experience with them."

The philosophers were about to enter into conversation with this devil, when St. Peter prevented them.

"Do not notice them," he cried, "for the devils are never more to be feared than when they try to make friends with us."

"Perhaps they spoke the truth just then," said a philosopher, who began to admire them.

"It is all the same," returned St. Peter, "for they never speak the truth unless it is to serve some bad end; so keep your minds upon what you are about, and do not for the world let go of the cock."

"Is he still alive?" they asked.

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"Of course he is," ejaculated St. Peter, "but he has become passive since I set his WILL running in the right direction. You see it had to be hammered down on the pillar of MORTIFICATION: it is the only anvil on which that locomotive can be mended."

St. Peter, seeing that they were tired, handed them his towel, and told them to rest long enough to wipe their faces. As they drew it across their brows they experienced a most delicious sensation. They could not realize whence it came, for they were now prepared for nothing but suffering while trying to hold the spirit of the age.

"Holy Father," said they, "where did you get this towel? It is most refreshing merely to draw it across our foreheads."

"That towel," said St. Peter, "is CONSOLATION: it is one of the gifts of the saints. St. Veronica gave it to the ship after she had wiped the face of our Lord with it, and the respite we take when we make use of it is RECREATION. We must now relieve him of his feathers, which are symbols of idleness, frivolity, gossip, slander, and calumnies. They must be pulled out with the tongs of RESERVE. We must not even touch them with the tips of our fingers, for they breed the most infectious plagues."

As fast as St. Peter pulled them out the devils seized them, and smacked their lips as if they were just suited to their taste. St. Peter then took up the file of INDUSTRY, and filed down the cock's bill, which was made out of curiosity. He then took hold of his tongue, which was filled with contention and strife. He raised the broad axe of DECISION, which had been cast in SILENCE, and tempered with MODERATION, and held it steadily by the handle of DELIBERATION, cut the tongue off quickly, covering it

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with ashes to prevent the blood spreading. The ashes were MOURNING.

"We must now attend to his ears," said St. Peter.

"They will not trouble us much," the philosophers remarked; "we cannot see that he has any."

"You are right," answered St. Peter, "for a moth lies beside them, which has eaten them off. That moth is human respect, which the spirit of the age was not strong enough to kill."

The philosophers were now inattentive, and began looking behind them to see what the devils were about.

St. Peter showed signs of impatience, when he said to them: "Let the devils be; to occupy yourselves with them when they are not tempting you is sending them an invitation to come and take possession of you. If you will leave them alone you have nothing to fear from them for the present."

These words, instead of satisfying them, only whetted their curiosity, and despite St. Peter's warnings, one of them peeped over his companion's shoulders, and then, foaming with excitement, he whispered to the others, "The devils are all huddled together, and as busy as they can be counting the feathers."

This piece of information acted upon them like a spark in a powder barrel; they fairly blew up with excitement, they were so curious to see how it was done.

"Holy Father," they cried, in a beseeching tone, "do let us look behind."

"No, no," St. Peter replied, "there is no turning round now, since you have once put your hand to the plough: you would lose the benefit of all you have gained."

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"But we might learn something, holy Father, that would be of advantage to us."

"Not in the least," insisted St. Peter. "It is a delusion to suppose that the devils can teach you anything worth knowing, and you should never try to earn your living by an occupation that is of no benefit to any one."

"Ah, but we know an Irishman who earns a fine living by feather counting."

"Remember," replied St. Peter, "that her Majesty's fowl-feather-counter is expected to count the feathers on the cock's back, which is quite a different thing from counting them after they have been pulled out."

"How does he do it?" they asked.

"Those are mysteries," answered St. Peter, "in which I am not initiated. I will now put on my spectacles."

He no sooner laid his hands on them than they all wanted to try them. They had hardly looked through them when they wished to keep them, because they could see much better with them.

"I cannot part with my spectacles," said St. Peter, "for they are the gift of DISCERNMENT, and belong to the ship. We must try to get rid of the ignorance of the age, which makes it so blind. You see there are two cataracts growing over each eye: one is suspicion, and the other is distrust; they are formed by the humours collected in his brain. They must be removed with the needle of PENETRATION, which is a difficult operation, for they are mostly composed of prejudice and conceit, which clog up the understanding, like so much pitch."

By dint of piercing St. Peter discovered something that appeared to him like a bit of putrefied hacked-up meat.

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He did not know what it was, but the philosophers, who had often imbibed from it, recognized it at once.

"That is not rotten meat," they exclaimed, "it is the brain of the age. Do you not perceive that it resembles the *lights* of a sheep?"

"This time I believe you are right," interrupted St. Peter, "for it looks to me now like the lights of some animal that has been dipped in a sink, and I am glad that you are here to recognize it, for I never could have believed, unless I had your word for it, that the brain of the age was in such a cankerous state."

He then picked it out with the awl of PERSPICACITY, and threw it over to the devils, who, instantly dropping the feathers, sprang to their feet and indignantly rejected the present.

"St. Peter," they yelled, "you might have a little respect for us, even though we are black, for you know we never take anything to hell as nasty as that."

"The devils are right this time," whispered St. Peter, "because I offered them an affront. Now keep a good hold until we get rid of the age's stubbornness and obstinacy, which lie in the neck: for these two infirmities there is only one remedy. You must apply the saw of SEVERITY, that has been set in JUSTICE and tempered with MERCY."

St. Peter then took its neck, sawed it into bits, and gave it to the devils, a gift which seemed to put them in a good humour again.

"We have now come to the malice of the age," said he, "which lies in the cock's claws. The best defence for that is to wear the breast-plate of INDIFFERENCE. I showed you the one I have on; it is made of wool, and renders

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the soul invulnerable against the attacks of our worst foes. The rest of his bones are full of sloth. To take that out requires a force that the grace of God alone can move; it is not in the power of man." Saying which, St. Peter took his bones and sent them to the wind.

Avarice is his gizzard, and cowardice is in his liver. St. Peter not having a tool that he cared to defile with them, not even his tongs, motioned to the devils to help themselves to them; but the gall (REPENTANCE) St. Peter took up himself, and put it carefully away in the pot of GRAVITY, which was a little black iron pot with three legs. The philosophers were curious to know what he was going to do with his heart.

St. Peter laughed at the very word. "Do you imagine," he replied, "that the spirit of the age has one?"

"Certainly," they cried; "why not?" And they accused the devils of stealing it when they put their claws in the cock.

But an arch-devil quickly answered, "We never stole it, for it was given to us by the spirit of the age itself."

"Then, holy Father, make them give it up."

"I doubt," replied St. Peter, "if they have it with them."

"You are right, St. Peter," rejoined the arch-devil, "for I gave it to my best friend the moment I got it."

The devils then left the ship, and the philosophers began wondering who the devil's best friend could be, and from conjecturing they fell into distrust.

"Ah, St. Peter," said they, with a sorrowful look, "we are afraid that you have deceived us, for you have murdered the cock, and you promised you would not. You pretended to love him so, on account of old associations,

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that we believed you; and here you have given him piecemeal to the devils, without leaving us so much as a feather for a souvenir of him."

"We have his gall," replied St. Peter; "that is quite enough until I get his heart, and if I have not that it is not my fault; if it had been in the right spot I should have found it. But the heart is of all things the hardest to be got. If I can get hold of that you will soon see that I can make him whole again, for his heart contains the roots of all the vices that we have just pulled out of him, and many more that never sprout out so that we can get hold of them. If we could have found his heart we need not have mangled his body so, for in time his heart would have perfected every part of him."

"Then why did you touch him at all? Have all our sacrifices been for nought?"

"I hope not," answered St. Peter, "for I trust that each of you will practice the lesson I have just given you, because it is useless to try to reform the age until each of you begins by trying to reform himself."

"By jove!" they exclaimed, with a terrified air, "do you expect us to hammer ourselves down on such an anvil as this, and to rub our foreheads on a rough stone, and pull out our mustachios at a grab."

"My dear friends," answered St. Peter, "you have forgotten the lesson already, or you would know that I do not expect you to pull out your mustachios at once, it would be asking too much of you; I only expect you to pull out one hair at a time. I did not pull out the cock's tail at a grab; I took the forceps of TENACITY, and pulled each feather out separately, for perfection is only attained by slow degrees. It requires the hand of TIME, and, as

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you see, that dial is at your command, for it rests on the binnacle, over which I shall expect you to lean."

"St. Peter," said they, with a groan, "the look-out is not a pleasant one, and we don't forget that one of your blackguards carried off the quills. Doubtless you will expect him to trim them, and guide our hands when we use them."

"And what then?" answered St. Peter. "You should be willing to become as little children again, that your youth may be renewed like the eagle's. You should not object to pass through their gymnasium, for with the breast plate I showed you they train men to fight so well that they make them invincible."

"What do they do to them," they asked, "that can make a man endure so much?"

"There goes one," said St. Peter, "you had better ask him."

"Halloa there," they shouted out, just as a Jesuit was going to leap into his boat; "what do you do to the boys to make them so tough? Do you dip them in the Styx?"

"No," cried back the Jesuit, "we don't dip them in the Styx, but we lay the sticks on them, to prevent them following the dark ways of Paris, which would lead them to hell."

Turning to St. Peter, the philosophers said, "He means Helen. How he clips his words."

"No, no," answered St. Peter; "he means just what he says, for they never stop short in their words."

"Are you aware, holy Father, that since we have been with you that you have not offered us anything to eat or

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drink? Is that one of the lessons you are going to teach us, to live without either?"

"I do not wish to deceive you," replied St. Peter, "and should be sorry to discourage you before you start, but you must expect to suffer hunger and thirst on my Bark. You may not think this right, but the only food I can give you, instead of satisfying you, will only increase your appetites. And even that I cannot offer you now, for no one should eat or drink on my Bark that has not a wedding garment on, and your clothes are soiled and torn."

"But can't you give us a sling, such a one as the Jesuit made for the spirit of the age?"

"I can let you have a line," St. Peter replied. And he instantly handed them one.

"But the dollar, where is it? That is what we want."

"Oh," answered St. Peter, "I shall expect you to find that and to put it on."

"We came down here believing that you would reward us generously for the services we have rendered you."

"Reward you for what?" St. Peter inquired.

"For having prepared the way," they replied, "for the world to receive you."

"I am sorry," said St. Peter, "to have again to remind you that instead of opening the way you have been blocking it up, and preventing people coming to me."

They looked at each other in astonishment that he should disclaim all indebtedness to them.

"I am afraid," observed St. Peter, "we do not understand each other."

"We hope, holy Father," they stammered, "you will not turn out to be an impostor."

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"How can I turn out to be an impostor," interrupted St. Peter, "when I am really what I say I am?"

"Are you not the missing link?" they asked.

"Yes," replied St. Peter, "I am."

"But are you not the missing link we have been looking for?"

"I should hope not, I should hope not," answered St. Peter, shaking his head.

Upon hearing those words they looked at one another aghast, and then began whispering.

"I wonder what he is then?"

"The truth is," remarked one, "since we came on board I have doubted that he was an ass at all."

"And I too," rejoined another, "for he does not bray like one: his voice is more like the roar of a lion."

"Yes," whispered several of them, "and when he exorcised the cock he certainly had the paw of one."

After parleying together they began shaking from head to foot, and with blanched lips, and bowing very low, they faltered, as they said, "Will your Holiness deign to tell your humble servants what you are?"

"I am," answered St. Peter, in the gentlest of tones, "but a feeble old man; and though I should die to-morrow I should not cease to be, for I represent those principles that have existed in the mind of God from all eternity. Therefore before Adam, I began. Man can never be happy unless he is united to me. I am therefore the link you should have been looking for." St. Peter then took from a box a handful of dust. "There," he continued, "is the missing link you have been looking for, but you do not believe it to be the genuine one. You think that

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man descended from an animal because his passions have made him one."

"Still," they insisted, "there is a mystery about you. Are you not aware that you are not like other men?"

"Yes," replied St. Peter; "I know I am the most unworthy among them, and in that respect I differ from the rest."

"Holy Father, we do not mean that; but are you not aware that you have an ass's head?"

"*I*, I!" exclaimed St. Peter, a little abashed. "I hope, gentlemen, you are not trying to flatter me, for my heart might be accessible to that. But I would that what you say were true, for it would be the greatest gift from heaven that I could ask, to appear before this generation like an ass."

"If you had a looking glass, holy Father, we would soon convince you that heaven has granted you the grace you ask."

"You will find one," said St. Peter, "fastened to the mast."

They led him to it, for he was willing to be led thus far by them. But he no sooner stood before it, when lo, instead of an ass's head, it reflected the head of an humble, zealous man. As they crowded around it to get a good view of it, they suddenly started back, for they imagined that a menagerie had rained down upon them. But after another glance they knew what it meant, and they were angry enough to smash it.

"What ails that glass?" they blustered out. "It flatters you, while it makes us look like beasts. Why do you keep such a glass as that?"

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"It is the best that can be had,* with the exception of this," said St. Peter, pointing to the deck,† in which he took a good look at himself.

The philosophers bent over to see how they would appear in it. One look was sufficient.

"What looking glasses!" they exclaimed. "The one at the mast makes us look like cannibals, and the one in the deck makes us appear like devils."

"You did not look long enough at yourselves in the deck," said St. Peter.

"That we did," they replied, "and we are not going to take another glance."

"There is something therein to behold besides yourselves," persisted St. Peter; "but before you can see it you must pray for an ass's head."

"Ah, holy Father, we will never pray for that. You must wish us to appear ridiculous."

"My dear friends," said St. Peter, "it will help you to discover the missing link, for it is hidden within it, and you can never be happy until you possess it. You can never possess God until you are meek, and when you are meek you will be willing to appear ridiculous."

St. Peter's words failed to convince them, and they replied by shrugging their shoulders and shaking their heads, as if what he demanded of them went too much against the grain.

"You may take passage on my Bark," St. Peter continued, "but I can never land you in heaven unless you are willing to combat your vanity and pride; for heaven outside is like a walled city with a very low and narrow

* Modesty's mirror, that is fastened to the mast.
† Humility.

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gate, and to reach that gate you have to pass first through this little door at my feet, that lets you into the interior of my Bark. The passage then is short and dark, for the only light you have is what is reflected from the sail of FAITH upon the cross, which is the plank you have to step on in order to get off."

"As it is your Bark, and you have the keys of the door, you can let in anybody you like, can you not?"

"Oh, dear, no," answered St. Peter; "if I could few would be lost, for I should force all I could into it. But CONSCIENCE the monitor binds me, and if I attempted to break her chains, and to let any one in there that had no right to pass, I might as well go and hang myself as Judas did, for I should be betraying the sacred trust confided to me."

"Well, then," they asked, "supposing you would not let us pass by the interior of your Bark, could we not jump off at the sides?"

"Certainly," replied St. Peter, "there is nothing to prevent you, but you would find yourselves in purgatory, or in hell, which lies a little beyond it. The gates of hell are always open, and so wide that they compass the whole territory; so you had better strive to enter into the narrow gate, lest you find, when too late, that you have made a mistake, and have entered the gates that are wide."

"Could we not throw down those walls?" they inquired.

"Yes," replied St. Peter, "for heaven can be taken by storm, if you combat while you are here with legitimate weapons. But the instant you begin to attack the celestial walls you will have the world and hell against you, and

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for that reason you will require an ass's head to protect you, for it is an invulnerable helmet."

"But could we not throw those walls down easier when we get to purgatory?" they asked; "we should then be nearer to them."

"No," replied St. Peter, "you can do nothing there for yourselves. But if you have any friends on earth they can, if they will, throw them down for you."

"Humph," they exclaimed, shaking their heads; "if getting to heaven depended on the help of our friends, we fear we should never see it."

"It would be better, I admit," resumed St. Peter, "to rely upon yourselves, and not risk going to hell or purgatory on account of the help you expect from your friends; notwithstanding if you are lucky enough to escape hell, it is in their power to help you if they will. But depend upon this: there is no getting into heaven by stealth. I wish I could persuade you to look again in the deck. I know you will be dissatisfied with what you see there of yourselves, but let each of you try and seek something there beyond himself."

They all showed at that moment a most extraordinary spirit of complacency, for they began bending over to see if there was really something there to be seen, but the first glimpse they got of themselves they wanted to draw back. But St. Peter cried out to them:

"Hammer yourselves down, my friends, and keep looking in until you see something beyond yourselves."

In spite of their repugnance they did as St. Peter bade them. For their obedience they had not long to wait; they soon beheld a face to which they were irresistibly drawn.

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"Holy Father," they exclaimed, in a changed tone of voice, for they trembled as they spoke, lest that face should escape them, "Holy Father, we see a face, and would that we could reach it. Can you not open the deck that we may descend to it, for we long to embrace it?"

"My dear friends," said St. Peter, who was affected to tears by their words, "that face you see reflected in my deck is not beneath you, it is above you; and it is in order that you may one day behold it that I wish you to take passage on my ship, it is the only Bark that can row you to it; for that beautiful face you now see dimly in my deck is the face of the Living God whom we serve."

They no sooner realized the truth of St. Peter's words than they threw themselves at his feet, and promised him an eternal allegiance; all they asked him in return was, that he would lead them where they could gaze for ever upon it.

"Ah," replied St. Peter, his eyes beaming with joy, "you are the kind that I want. I do not want people I should have to *treat* in order to get them on my Bark. I want only those to come on it who are drawn by the love of God."

"Tell us, holy Father, where we are to get the tools to work with."

"Ask the Mother of God and the saints for them, and you will be sure to obtain them."

"But why cannot we go straight to God for them without bothering any one else?"

"There is no harm in doing so, my friends, for they all belong to Him, and He will not refuse you anything you

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ask of Him, when you ask it with a desire to do His will. But you will be likely to receive them a great deal sooner if you follow my advice, because there is order in heaven, and I appeal to your common sense. If you were near the court of a great king, and you wanted to work for him, and you needed some tools, for instance, a hammer, a file, or a saw, you would not surely go to the king and ask him for them, you would go to one of his workmen. So if you wish to have any of those tools you saw me working with, apply to St. Joseph, or any other saint you choose. Make your petition, and ask the Mother of God and the saints to present it for you as a personal request of their own; God will surely listen to His Mother and best friends in preference to the first beggar who presents himself at the door."

They all agreed with St. Peter, and wondered that the truth had never flashed on them before.

"I wonder," they asked, "if any of them could get us some cash?"

"If your motive is good," said St. Peter, "and you require it for the good of your soul, or for the salvation of your neighbour, I should apply to His Mother for it."

"Holy Father, where did you get that beautiful urn in which you keep your tools? We saw you drink out of it too, and thought it most inhospitable in you not to offer us any of its contents."

"Ah," said St. Peter, "I was expecting you would ask me that. That urn is CONFIDENCE, a most precious gift, and we have to be very careful of it, for it is fragile; and that is why I do not wish my children with their urns to run with those children who throw stones, as I fear they might get broken."

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"But you have not answered our question, holy Father. Where did you get that beautiful urn?"

"The Blessed Virgin," replied St. Peter, "procured it for me. You know that by her request several of them were brought out at the wedding of Cana. It was one of the first miracles our Lord did in public, to show that if you desire the gifts of God, the first thing you require is the urn of CONFIDENCE to hold them, otherwise they risk being scattered about, and some of them might get broken or lost. When you get the urns, however, you are expected to put the tools in them, although the world fills them first with the waters of affliction, and keeps pouring it in, no matter what you have there. That must not discourage you, and you must carry your urn straight up with care, for the same face you saw in the deck will look in it and bless it, and the blessing will change that water into the most delicious wine, which will strengthen and invigorate you while you are using those tools, or trying to procure them. Thus you see we have to practice poverty, no matter how rich we may be; for unless we are languishing by this spring, where we can drink out of the cup of SORROW, we have to drink out of the same vessel in which we carry our tools, unless God chooses to let us drink out of the spring, which is a favour I have already shown you is very difficult to obtain."

"But pray explain to us, holy Father, if you please, how it is possible for you to make a distinction between sins, and call one venial, and another mortal, or one white, and the other black; for they all look alike to us?"

"Don't stop for that," replied St. Peter, "for it is the simplest of all things to understand. For example, if a

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child is eating a piece of bread on the Bark, and he inadvertently lets the crumbs fall on the deck, he disfigures it so that you cannot see your face in it as well. He does not deserve to be punished for that; but if he deliberately goes and throws ink on it, and rubs his foot in it, and does not confess his fault, and is not sorry for it, why he will get hell for it."

They agreed that he would deserve it.

"We do not forget, holy Father, that the Bark we are now on is only a model of your old one. When are you going to take us on that?"

"I am ready now to take you any time. I will put you in the hands of my crew,* who will do all they can to assist you, for I wish you to take a bath, and change your clothes, and put new garments on before I take you on board."

They now became as pliant as lambs, and behaved more like children than grown-up men. While the crew were helping them to prepare, one of them, addressing an old friar, inquired, "What will become of St. Peter's Bark when the world comes to an end?"

"When the final dissolution takes place," the monk replied, "the hull of the Bark, with nearly all it contains, will be consumed by the fire of love, with which it is now ablaze. Wisdom and Charity alone will remain, while the anchor will be hurled through the eternity of space, where it will be sinking for centuries without finding a resting place, until at length it will be spent by the force of its own velocity, and its substance will become a part of the atmospheric space."

When they were prepared, St. Peter began rowing

* The crew represent the clergy, the passengers the laity.

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them towards his Bark. When they were fairly under way he asked them to join him in prayer. As they prayed, the horizon of the supernatural world began to widen, and they could see distinctly a broad sea covered with ships sailing in different directions.

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CHAPTER XVI.

PART III.

There was one ship that attracted the attention of the new converts more than the others, on account of its unwieldy bulk and clumsy build. Its course appeared upwards, but it was unable to rise on account of its freight. Had it not been launched on the sea no one would have taken it to be a ship at all, much less a man-of-war, for it resembled far more an overloaded struggling camel, on whose back sat astride the creature of Babylon, spoken of in Isaias. St. Peter pointed to it sorrowfully as he wiped away a tear.

"Alas!" he said, "there is my Bark as some of my children make it appear."

None of the converted philosophers were surprised at the figure it made, for to their eyes it looked as St. Peter's Bark had till lately always appeared to them. There was a large ship directly in front of it, as if it had been placed there in direct opposition to it, for their prows nearly met. Its exterior was very attractive, although it was impossible to discern its shape, it was so covered with illuminated mottoes, gaudily wrought banners, and flaunting flags. A casual observer might have mistaken it for a Roman Amphitheatre converted into a religious camp.

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"Yes," added St. Peter, with a sigh, "that ungainly looking thing over there is my Bark, and that craft you see in front of it, decked off so handsomely, is what they call 'The Branch.' Those ships you see sailing in every direction but the right one were mostly built by the disaffected crew who have deserted the Branch. Those little ships running into the larger craft, and trying to board them for the purpose of massacreing and robbing the crew, they are a kind of corsairs, or communists, the precocious children of the reformation, with which the sea is overrun."

The philosophers begged St. Peter to tell them how his Bark could possibly be nestled in the hand of God, since it appeared to be held up by several men standing under it, who seemed to be busily kicking one another's shins, and by one man in particular, who, whilst kneeling under it, and holding it up on the tips of his ears, devoutly hugged an empty demijohn.*

"Oh," replied St. Peter, "that represents the *violence* of the American Catholic press, commonly supposed to be supporting my Bark, and those men you see under it are the editors themselves, who behave as if its preservation and existence depended on them. All they do is to kick at each other, and throw mushrooms into the enemy's camp. That ass's head you see on the shoulders of one editor is not a fancy, but a fact, for some men are born asses, and other some there are who make themselves appear such for the kingdom of heaven."

"Holy Father," they inquired, "what keeps them up? They appear to have nothing to stand on."

* A bottle covered with wicker work, usually used for holding ardent spirits.

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"That is more than I can tell," answered St. Peter, "it is however the position they hold about my Bark; for, instead of coming on deck, they have managed to get under the Bark, and imagine they are holding it up."

"Have you no intelligent men in America to assist you?" they asked.

"Plenty of them," said St. Peter, "and the intelligent ones are like the American flying artillery when they have a chance to act, but the violent ones have got the start, and the balls of the moderate press have but little effect, for they fall on the mushrooms with which the violent ones have flooded the enemy's camp; and the people whom they are intended to crush, not being able to distinguish one from the other, think they are fighting for fun, and have thrown in the mushrooms so as to do them no harm, and they take it in such good part that they seldom fire back."

The boat which was rowing the new converts over had now come close to the Bark.

"You see," said St. Peter, "that some of my children have covered the cross until the stern of my ship looks like a camel's rump. They pretend that the sight of the cross prevents people taking passage on my Bark; they have suspended to it this dangling thing, which they have knotted and tied to serve as a string, and they make use of it to pull them on board. I have talked to them again and again about using so much superfluity in words, and have told them repeatedly that they only weaken the truth by freighting it with so much dross; but all that I can say is of but little avail, and there it still hangs, making my Bark look as if it had a tail."

One of the crew held it aside, and raised up the mat-

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tresses that covered the cross, while St. Peter showed the philosophers how they were to get on board.

"Put your hands on the cross," said he, "then raise yourselves up as if you were climbing over a wall, but the moment you are on it throw yourselves down, and creep on your hands and knees until you reach the helm, where I will be to receive you; you should come on my Bark like little children going into their mother's arms. But when your course is run you should walk off from it like victors going to receive a crown."

They were scarcely on board when they became so terribly frightened that their hair stood on end, for they saw several ironclads running up against the Bark as if they were about to run into it with their sterns.

"Holy Father, protect us," they cried, shaking from head to foot. "Are you at war?" And they rushed to the sides of the Bark as if to jump off.

St. Peter stretched out his hand and bade them stay.

"Don't be afraid," he said, "it is nothing worse than the *violence* of the European Catholic press defending my Bark; an infliction we have been labouring under long enough to be alone proof that my Bark is a divine Bark, protected by the hand of God; nothing human could ever have stood so dreadful a strain for such a length of time."

St. Peter's words, instead of reassuring them, frightened them the more.

"If your friends defending you," they exclaimed, "stun us on board, what will become of us when you are attacked by the foe? Why, the mere shock and noise will kill us outright."

"No, no," replied St. Peter; "on my Bark we have nothing to fear from external foes, but I confess there

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is a great deal to fear from the tepidity or violence of our *soi-disant* friends. There is no union, nor sympathy, nor charity among the chiefs of that class of the press, and each of those ironclads represents one of them. A great part of their ammunition is wasted by firing into one another, which weakens them so materially that when they attack the enemy, instead of striking all together deliberately and persistently into the vitals of the foe, they make separate raids, as though each ironclad was afraid the other might gain a victory; whilst the enemy, acting with greater consistency, unite their forces, and drive their opponents back so speedily, that the latter, never having even a chance to turn round, are continually banging their sterns into my Bark."

"Have you no capable men in Europe who can manage that kind of thing for you better than that?"

"Yes, yes," replied St. Peter; "but they belong to the moderate Catholic press, really zealous defenders of the truth. They stand on my Bark and use bombshells. They could make terrible ravages among the enemy were it not for the ironclads which come bang up against my Bark just as the moderates are firing off, so as to upset their mortars, make them miss their aim, and expend their ammunition, for their shells, instead of falling into the enemy's camp, drop harmlessly into the water."

"Why do not the moderates give the ironclads a broadside and sink them?"

"Do you not perceive," St. Peter replied, "that is just what would happen if the guns of the moderates did not, from their superior position, fire clear over them; it is the only thing that saves them."

St. Peter had hardly uttered those words when a mass

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of dirt came spattering right in his face. The converts were so indignant that they rushed towards him to help him rub it off.

"What!" they ejaculated, "does the enemy treat you like that?"

"Oh, no," said St. Peter, with sorrow not unmixed with anger; "that blow came from some of my own children. The liberals have played me that dirty trick. You see them at the prow, standing with their backs to the mast, throwing sympathizing looks over at the 'Branch.' They agree with the enemy that we are too ultramontane at Rome, and they never look towards the helm unless they wish to throw dirt in my face, or a stone at my head. It is they who have rigged up the mast until it appears like a wanton with long braided hair hanging down to the deck."

The converts seeing some of the liberals pulling at these tresses, wondered what they meant.

"Are they trying," they asked, "to capsize the ship by pulling over the mast?"

"Alas!" said St. Peter, "they know not what they do; the tresses they have attached to the top of the mast are the strands of folly, which are opposed to wisdom, and those who are pulling at them are my children who oppose my views on education. If my Bark could have been capsized by their manœuvres, it would long since have been upset. They have besides pasted their reasons up there too, painting them so as to give them a fair face, which they have turned with a smiling grace towards the Branch."

"What is that scarlet cloak," they asked, "thrown around the mast?"

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"That," answered St. Peter, "was put there by some slothful souls fond of display, who blush at holy poverty, and try to hide it under the devil's livery. That red cloak is typical of false shame. I beg them to take it off and throw it aside; but if you only saw what they have put under it, you would not wonder at their obstinacy in keeping it. They have rigged up the mast with a pair of stays, the stays of diplomacy, drawn so tightly by the cords of policy that you would think they were afraid to unfurl the sails lest they should be blown away."

"Did the liberals," inquired the converts, "do all that?"

"No," replied St. Peter; "I must be just, and not make the liberals out worse than they are. A great many of my other children, who are dear to my heart, had a pull at that. In vain do I rap them over the knuckles every time I catch them drawing the stays together to make them meet. I beseech them to take them off, for I long again to see the sails, because the stays and scarlet cloak that conceal them quite shut out the light from the sail of faith, which has been eaten into like a honeycomb by the moth of human respect. That bustle, too, which some of them have persisted in tying on the mast is filled with conceit; it has been put on by those who are not willing to be led, but who are determined to lead everybody else. They think they have a right to do just as they please on board, so long as they don't jump off. Therefore it is that they rip and tear, cut and slash, blustering about all the while, and screaming 'Reform! Reform!' at the top of their voice, like newsboys do with their morning papers, and deafening me with their discordant cries. I tell them to be quiet, that the ship is all right if they would sit down and let it

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alone, and I beg them to take that bustle down, for it puts me to the blush. But it is idle speaking to them. Instead of giving heed to my words they round upon me, and presume to advise me what I should do. And just see how they have padded the crown of thorns, too. They object to the efforts and sacrifices that are required to crush heresy, and pretend that I exaggerate its evils, and they dare tell me that it is my duty to come to terms with it, the better to induce heretics to join my Bark. So they have taken the crown of thorns and filled it with husks, and padded it with tow, and covered it with a pair of drawers, and they then hold it up to me to show me what I should do to put heresy down. Their husks are deceit, their tow tortuous discourse, and their drawers are fraud. Of course the first thing they do is to crush the roses, which does not appear to cost them a thought. 'What is the use of showing them,' they say, 'when they prevent others from coming on board?' You see they even wish me to conceal my devotion to the Mother of God. They might as well ask me to hide my devotion to her Son. And they tell me, too, that I am keeping heretics in the outer darkness with my bulls and encyclicals, which grate on the extremely delicate and over sensitive nerves of the Protestant public. But take out their padding, throw away their husks, pull off their drawers, and you will see that though the roses are crushed, the thorns are there still, and prickly as ever. So it is with those who are induced by misrepresentations to join my Bark. If you could but look into their souls you would see that they are still heretics at heart, a kind of passengers I do not want, for they are a plague, and breed pestilence on my Bark."

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"But, holy Father," they exclaimed, "what is that skirt on the mast, that is seen hanging up in so many of the shops?"

"That skirt," replied St. Peter, "is public opinion, sometimes called a 'pull back.' It gives me a lot of trouble; for since it has been hung upon the mast you would think the world had retrograded to paganism. You would imagine it to be their idol, for they actually bow down before it, and pay it so much homage that I cannot get rid of it. Men worship it with such fervour and intensity that you would think they expected to save their souls by it."

"Did the liberals put up that, too?"

"Ah," answered St. Peter, as he heaved a deep sigh, "don't question me too closely in regard to that, or you will force me to tell you something that cuts me to the heart, for I have actually caught some of my dearest children making genuflexions to it, and I suspect that they all had a hand in putting it up."

"Holy Father," they said, "we don't wish to be rude, but with all respect due to you we must say that there is a dreadful stench at the helm. Can't you get rid of it?"

"My dear children," replied St. Peter, "I know it too well; it is excommunicated souls holding on to the spoils of sacrilege; that's what you smell, and I am obliged to have them right under my nose at the helm, where their crimes cry to heaven for vengeance; but we in our turn send up to heaven the incense of prayer, and implore the Almighty to stay His hand, hoping that the despoilers of His land may yet repent. But I see no signs of it thus far, for the robbers have quietly sat down, and are rubbing up their spoils, as bandits do when they bring them to

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their dens, and they force their captives to sweep around them, and call strangers' attention to it, and ask them as they pass if they ever saw the space around the helm kept so clean before, when the stench is strong enough to knock you down."

"But what is that thickly tainted mist, holy Father, we see hovering about you like a miasma? It is too thick to rise, and can only descend."

"Let us thank God it cannot rise," St. Peter exclaimed, "for that thickly tainted air I am obliged to walk in is a species of literature composed of fulsome flattery and praise, akin to mockery, which has always been served up to those in authority. There is nothing more hurtful to health. Hitherto the hand of God has preserved me, and not even permitted it to come up to my neck, because if I should inhale it, it would sicken me so that I should have to guide my Bark from my bed."

They were moving towards the prow when they tripped over something that appeared like a cat that had been gagged and tied up in a bag. Lo! it was Joy.

"Ah," said St. Peter, "that is one of the cruelest things they do; they put the gag of prudery in the lambkin's mouth so that it can hardly draw its breath, and fasten the strait jacket of mock modesty around its neck, and draw it down as tightly as they can over its body, and fasten it to its hind legs lest any one should see its tail. The poor little thing can hardly move."

St. Peter took it up in his arms and tried to release it, but some of the old women set up such a wailing that for peace sake he was obliged to drop it. As it was, the olive branch was nearly dead, being so completely covered up by the scarlet cloak, the pull back, and the stays,

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besides having all its bark and leaves eaten off by the gay kid of SUCCESS, that was let loose on the deck. CHARITY'S flames, too, were smothered, and the lights from the anchor's shaft could no longer be seen, they were so covered up with luggage and every conceivable sort of stuff the passengers had insisted upon bringing on board; and the anchor's stock, too, was so loaded down with people that it gave the Bark the appearance of having a camel's head, while the luggage around the mast made it look like a hump, on the top of which stood the kid of SUCCESS, chewing a leaf out of MEMORY'S book, and looking defiantly at CONSCIENCE, as if he were ready to give her a bunt.

St. Peter, pointing to the people on the anchor's stock, said, "These are my children who are trying by REASON and HUMAN PRUDENCE alone to save themselves. You see that when they hang on to the anchor's stock they have nothing to stand on: when they stand on it they have nothing to hold on to. They resemble men holding on to a clothes line drawn over a bottomless abyss, or like children standing on a tight rope and trying to keep their footing by holding on to a broken ceiling. In vain have I tried to convince them of their perilous position, but they are so infatuated with the light of REASON, they will not believe any one can see better by anything else. They have the fox of SAGACITY by them, too, which has become a serpent in subtilty, and he is trying to play the fawn because he is petted like a lamb. Their ears are stunned by the gazelle of MIRTH, that has been transformed into an immense reindeer, while the mastiff of SUSPICIOUS ATTENTION is only on the alert to see what he can find to eat. The weasel of ACUTENESS is sound asleep, while the cony of CONTENTMENT has become a restless tramp."

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St. Peter turned his eyes sadly from them, and was slowly wending his way back to the helm, when they espied Father Eel coming with hasty steps towards them, as if he had joyful news to tell, and they instantly conjectured that he must have found the heart of the age. They were greatly disappointed, however, when they heard him exclaim:

"Holy Father, there is *a goose* on board."

"A goose!" ejaculated St. Peter, as a ray of hope lighted up his features. "The geese once saved Rome: they should be always treated with consideration here. Where does she come from?"

"America," answered the Jesuit.

"Humph," mumbled the philosophers, "can anything good come from there?"

"Indeed," promptly replied St. Peter, "a great deal of good does come from there. Consider all that they have done to ameliorate the condition of material life. It was they who discovered and made practical those powers and forces which I showed you already existed in the spiritual life, such as the steam engine, the telegraph, and the electric light.* But what does this goose from America propose to do over here?"

"She says, holy Father, that she has come to Europe to release you, to clean your Bark, sweep the States of the Church, and to knock down the Branch."

At those words St. Peter was taken a little aback.

"Would that it were possible," he ejaculated, with a deep sigh. But after a moment's reflection he added,

* "By faith we understand that the world was framed by the word of God; that from invisible things visible things might be made." (*Hebrews* xi. 3.)

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with a hopeful glance, "As she is an American there is no telling what she can do, and as God permitted the geese once to save Rome, perhaps it is His will that they should clean it too. We must give her a chance. What does she require?"

"Only the privilege to act, holy Father," replied the Jesuit, "because she has brought her tools."

"What kind of tools?" inquired St. Peter, with an anxious look.

"I saw her," said the Jesuit, "with a pen, an arrow, a pair of scissors, and a broom."

St. Peter was startled upon hearing those words, and turned pale.

"Indeed," said he, "she has brought formidable weapons with her. Before I set her to work with such an array I must know something about her. How did she get on board? I did not see her on the cross."

"No, holy Father, nor did anybody else, for she stepped over it, and got on in some extraordinary way, by which I believe she is led. I asked her how she got on deck, and she told me that she did not care to put her foot into that knotty discourse at the end of your ship that resembles a tail, so she got on by flying over our heads."

"Well," said St. Peter, "that looks as if she had a little sense."

"She told me, holy Father, if you would permit her, that she can get rid of all that superfluous stuff."

"I must know more about her first," said St. Peter. "Will she obey?"

"She said that it was practising obedience that brought down upon her all her misfortunes. Still, she told me that if it was God's will to try her love for Him in that

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way, she was resigned, and even though He permitted the devils to persecute her for it unto death, that in offering up her last breath she intended to obey."

"Ah," answered St. Peter, "that sounds well. But I will test her obedience one of these days to satisfy myself, for if she is made of such material, she can do a great deal of good with her American blood."

As they were speaking the goose happened to pass, and the Jesuit pointed her out. The converts shrugged their shoulders, and pooh-poohed at the very thought of such a forlorn looking creature being able to do any good. St. Peter made no remark. He never judged from appearances, but he requested the Jesuit to tell him something more about her.

"She has written her life, holy Father," said he; "to give you the details would detain you too long. But she was born in America, and was converted in France, when she returned to her country, wrote her life, and built a church, for which her enemies persecuted her nearly to death. They slandered her, robbed her, burnt her nest, and then plucked her, singed her, and roasted her, which makes her appear so forlorn. I believe she lost everything but a quill, which she managed to save by concealing it under her wing."

"A formidable weapon of offence and defence," St. Peter observed.

"Still," replied the Jesuit, "to use it requires ink and paper, and the goose had neither; and one must be sheltered, too, and fed, and the goose had no place to lay her head, so she went into a hospital and attended the sick. While there she fell in love with a *proper gander*, and not knowing what to do, she consulted her director,

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who advised her to marry him, as she had no vocation for the religious life."

"Did she ever imagine that she had one?" inquired St. Peter.

"Yes, holy Father," answered the Jesuit, "and she imagines to this day that God desired her to believe that such was His will while she was writing her life; but when He made known to her by the mouth of an experienced monk that she had no more of a religious vocation than a March hare, like Abraham, when God made known to him that he was to stay his hand, and not sacrifice his son, she followed the example of that illustrious patriarch, and became perfectly resigned, and instead of entering a convent, she went and got married."

"She might have done worse," observed the converts.

"Hear me through first," answered the Jesuit. "They were no sooner married than the goose discovered that her *proper gander* had talents that he had concealed from her before the knot was tied. Why, he could play on a harp of a thousand strings all out of tune at a time! When once he began to play he would keep it up night and day, notwithstanding the music did not pay, as it was not suited to the public taste, for it only drew the police, and drove the goose away. Finding herself without any means of support, she became a professional. Her husband in the meantime had trained her."

"Ah," interposed the converts, "if she can play she must be independent."

"Not so," returned the Jesuit, "for she became a professional beggar, and that profession, instead of humbling her, appears to have infused into her an inordinate ambi-

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tion, which our fathers have tried to restrain, for she was not content with getting enough to eat, but her mind took an industrious turn, and she was determined to *cut* and to *sweep*. One day she came to us begging for a pair of scissors and a broom, when one of our fathers, who saw her at the door, exclaimed, 'Methinks, my child, you are getting too ambitious.'

"'Good father,' quoth the goose, with a tear in her eye, 'all I have in the world is a quill.'

"'Surely you do not need more,' the father replied, 'to do what you are going to do, for a *quill can cut better than any scissors, and sweep cleaner than any broom*. Learn to practice holy poverty as we do.' Saying which, he shut the door, and the goose found herself again in the streets alone. She sat down on the door step, feeling a little disconsolate when she found that the Jesuits, whom she considered her best friends, had lost faith in her; and seeing that no confidence could be placed in man, she put all her trust in God, and she prayed to Him night and day to come to her aid. Months and years thus passed away, when at length she appealed to the saints, and it seems they tried her patience too, until the tenth of last June, when she declares that the clouds began to disperse, for St. Patrick then gave her a pair of scissors, and St. Joseph gave her a broom. Still she was not satisfied, for she wanted an arrow; she prayed to St. Michael, and she says he sent her one. She no sooner found herself in possession of these gifts than she instantly turned them into weapons of offence. Her scissors she converted into satire, and trimmed her quill with them, which gave it a double edge; out of her broom she made a piece of impertinence; her arrow she turned into ridicule.

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She tries to conceal it, and carries it under her wing, but the quill, the scissors, and broom she parades, as if they were the finest plumes in the world for a beggarly disconsolate bird."

"How did she get here?" inquired St. Peter.

"She told me that our Lady of Perpetual Succour gave her a pair of good wings, and that our Lady of Good Counsel* directs all her ways."

"I trust," said St. Peter, "this is not a delusion, but that God has had mercy on us, and has sent the goose over here to help us. You may tell her that I give her permission to clean my Bark, but that she must not touch a hair of one of my children's heads."

"That reminds me," answered the Jesuit, "she asked me for the loan of a handkerchief."†

"She will need one," rejoined St. Peter, "to wipe her eyes if she undertakes to clean my ship, it will raise such a dust."

"Ah, but she wishes it," said the Jesuit, "to wipe your children's eyes. She says that the fire on your Bark has been burning very low, and many of them are crying with the cold."

"No, no," interrupted St. Peter, "the Americans are too rash to do such delicate work; in wiping my children's eyes she might blind them for life. I shall take no such responsibility; but tell her to go to work."

The Jesuit found the goose near the helm, leaning over a pot of chloride of lime, trying to catch her breath. She no sooner heard what he had to say than she caught the

* See "Our Good Counsellor; a Key to St. Peter and the Cock."

† Emblem of insolence.

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gay kid of SUCCESS, and handed it over to the FEAR OF THE LORD, who, the instant he saw she was going to sweep the deck, gathered up his other pets, and took them down to the bottom of the ship, and placed them near his cell. She then took her broom and was sweeping as hard as she could, when the liberals pounced upon her, as if they were going to wring her neck, and demanded what she meant by kicking up such a dust.

"I am only sweeping up the dirt," replied the goose, "that you have been throwing in St. Peter's face."

"We recommend you, ma'am, to let things be, or you will raise such a storm over your head that you will be glad to find a cellar to shelter you yet."

"Oh," returned the goose, "I have been so long out in the wet that a ducking or two, more or less, will not hurt me much. To please you for once I will lay the broom aside while you help me to remove this muck, for I wish to clean the ship, to get it ready to receive her Majesty the State."

"Muck, you imp!" screamed out some of the passengers when the goose's meaning began to dawn upon them; "can't you see it is our luggage?"

"If this is your luggage," the goose replied, "you have made a mistake and got on the wrong ship. You should have taken passage on the 'Branch;' you would have found better accommodation there for that sort of stuff, as it is in their line. But St. Peter's Bark is a man-of-war, and should never be converted into a mere merchant-man. You all know that it runs straight into the port of Heaven, and the only luggage that is allowed to enter there are good works; all that I can see lying about here you can carry in your hands: the rest you know

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would be considered contraband, and would be seized, and the owners punished for attempting to ship it."

"That is none of your business," they shouted. "You attend to your own affairs, and we will attend to ours."

"That is just what I am doing," replied the goose, "for I have come over here to clean the ship. St. Peter does not wish to have the State see how it has been kept."

"We will clean it, then, ourselves," they retorted, "without your help."

"None of you are able to work," replied the goose; "you are so worn out taking care of this stuff that you have no strength left. If you would only let it go you would soon recover your health."

Saying which, without more ado the goose took her broom and shoved it off the deck. But some of the passengers were so attached to it that they went overboard with it, and tried to float a-top of it; instead of bearing them up, it acted like a weight that had been tied around their necks expressly to sink them.

The goose then went to the binnacle. There was but little cleaning to be done there, for very few ever approached it; but the anchor's shaft was completely covered up by the easy couches prosperity had raised over it. They were raised so high that the poor found sitting accommodation underneath them without a murmur, for the ejaculatory prayers uprising from their hearts, and falling on the anchor's shaft, emitted sparks, lighting up their souls, and cheering them on their way.

The goose began entreating those seated on the easy couches to get down, since she wished to remove them as not belonging to the Bark; but those who occupied

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them were so entirely absorbed in discussing the news of the day, and consulting the latest fashion plates, that they did not hear her.

When she spoke again she raised her voice, and cried, "Ladies and gentlemen, those sofas you are sitting on are supported by barrels of dynamite, likely any moment to go off and blow you to atoms."

This time they all heard her, and jumping quickly off their perch, began to abuse the crew soundly for not having told them of their perilous position on board. But the crew assured them that they had never been allowed to approach them near enough to be heard before; that they had often tried to make them understand that there was no going to heaven first class, as none but steerage passengers were permitted to land; that all the others, if they were not blown overboard before they reached the shore, remained in quarantine, God alone knew how long.

While the passengers and crew were disputing, the goose dumped off the furniture, so as to get a good hold of the dynamite barrels. Before rolling them off, however, she marked them all over, branding them in their real character, as "wealth and prosperity," believing that the ironclads would be sure to avoid them, as they had always pretended to shun prosperity, and had expressed a most sovereign contempt for filthy lucre. But, alas! for the fickleness of poor mortals! The commanders of the ironclads no sooner caught sight of the barrels, and read their labels, than they started in quick pursuit of them, and for the first time in the last century St. Peter's Bark enjoyed a calm. The barrels had floated out into the sea, and the ironclads began fighting so desperately in order

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to get possession of them, that the enemy did not dare to approach them.

The goose meanwhile got under the Bark to call on the editors of the American *violent* Catholic press to see if she could do anything for them, when lo! they too had gone to join in the struggles to try to get the barrels, with the exception of the one who was holding up the Bark on the tips of his ears while he hugged an empty demijohn; but the moment he saw the goose he instantly sank. The goose would have pulled him up by the hair of his head had she dared, but she was afraid to disobey St. Peter, who had forbidden her to touch his children's hair. To her great joy, however, he rose again, and seeing that the Bark had not gone under, he raised his eyes and the demijohn to heaven, and thanked God for the miracle, for it appeared to him one of the greatest miracles ever wrought, that the Bark should exist for a moment without his support.

The Orders, seeing his perilous position, rowed towards him, to try and save him, but it was impossible to overtake him, he swam so fast in the direction that his confrères had taken, for he was determined to try his hand too, and see if he could not haul in a barrel.

The goose then set about cleaning the prow, but the anchor's stock, which but a few moments ago was loaded so heavily with people that it gave the ship the appearance of having a camel's head, was now rid of them all. She supposed these people had come to their senses, and had taken a better position on board. But, alas! they too had gone off in the direction of the floating

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barrels, because REASON and HUMAN PRUDENCE had recommended them to take that course.

She then spread her wings and flew upwards until she reached the top of the mast, and with her scissors began clipping the strands of folly, which some of the liberals, and all those who opposed St. Peter's views on education, were pulling with all their might; but as fast as she clipped them, overboard they went, without ever knowing what sent them there, for their eyes were all the while fixed upon the Branch, to which they were trying to make the mast bend. No sooner did the passengers perceive what the goose was doing than they began throwing stones at her, and screaming "Sacrilege!" and running to St. Peter, they told him that that imp from America was actually mutilating the mast.

"Let her alone," St. Peter answered them, "and we will soon be rid of that false face up there, which is a disgrace to my ship, and annoys me more than anything else."

The goose began prying about it, keeping steadily at work upon it until it was detached, when it broke in innumerable particles, like so many soap bubbles, for the instant they came in contact with the air they burst. The goose then ripped off the scarlet cloak, and gave it to the gales, that quickly bore it away; but the moment she laid her scissors on the *pull-back*,* the passengers set up a wail such as the Assyrians raised when their idols were broke in the temple of Baal.

"Ah," exclaimed St. Peter, with a deep sigh, "that

* Public opinion.

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pull-back is the Dagon of the nineteenth century. I am sick at heart seeing my children bow down before it."

It was not so easy to get it off the mast; the passengers had fastened it on so tightly, and they clung to it as they would to their very lives. As fast as the goose ripped it off they tied it on again. Finally, she got down and sat on it, when the passengers caught hold of her and doubled her up in it, hoping to smother her alive; but she cut her way through it as if it had been grass, and then began to pray that God would help her to wrest it from their grasp. Suddenly there arose a blast which swept around the mast and bore the pull-back, and those who clung to it, away.

She then slashed into the pair of stays,* which were no sooner taken off the mast than the crew sent up a shout of joy, because they could see the sails again.

The goose then sought for the lambkin Joy, which she found by the side of some old women, who would not allow him even to creep, while they were patting him on the back, trying to make him bleat, with a gag† in his mouth and a strait jacket‡ fastened round his neck and his feet. The goose snatched him away from these dames, rent the strait jacket in twain, pulled off the gag, and then set him down, when he went skipping over the deck like a fawn. The prudes were so shocked at the goose's behaviour that they pulled their petticoats over their heads to hide their faces.

She then picked out the moth of human respect, that was eating up the olive branch, and was destroying Peace on board. As soon as she got hold of it she threw it on the deck and smashed it with her foot. The ship then

* Diplomacy. † Prudery. ‡ Mock modesty.

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began to feel warm again, for CHARITY's flames were still alight, and PEACE instantly revived. The goose then set to work to take out the rubbish that had been put round the crown of thorns. It was easy enough to pull off the drawers, for they had only been pinned on with the pin of meanness, which has neither head nor point. She presented them to the prudes, and then undertook to dig out the husks and pull out the tow, but the thorns scratched her, so she had to let go. The prudes came to see what she was about, and to thank her for the drawers, also to inquire what they were intended for. Said the goose, "Draw them up on your arms, it will prevent them getting tanned; and tie the band around your neck, it will keep out the cold; and then stand before the glass, and stop praying for a beau." They at once blessed themselves, and did as the goose directed, but as soon as they looked in MODESTY's mirror they saw the word "incorrigible" written on their foreheads. In a fit of despair they rushed back to the goose to ask her if she thought there was any hope for them.

"Alas!" sighed the goose, as she shook her head doubtingly, and was about to implore them not to do as Judas did, but before she could finish they took off the drawers and hung themselves, and thus the Bark got clear of them. But their demise brought luck to the goose, for in the act of expiring one of their teeth dropped out and fell on the crown of thorns. It no sooner touched it than the husks and the tow began to ignite, for their teeth were filled with spite, which is the flint for deceit, and lights the fire for tortuous discourse. That rubbish was no sooner consumed, and the ashes scattered by the wind, than a beneficent dew was seen to fall, causing the roses

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to bloom, which, as they adjusted themselves round the thorns, filled the ship with the most delicious fragrance.

The next thing the goose did was to go to the cross and try to cut off that superfluous discourse which looked like a tail fastened to the Bark. But she had not brought the tool to do it with. One of the crew lent her his penknife, the gift of BREVITY, with which she cut it off quickly, and then presented it to those who had attached it to the ship, and told them to use it to tie their tongues with.

She then unloaded the cross, which was piled up with mattresses and every conceivable stuff, in order to make out of it a comfortable berth; and then she dismantled the anchor's arms, which were covered with the railing, scoffing, and mocking of the despoilers of the sanctuaries. Great was the joy of the crew when they saw it divested of its loathsome trappings, for it was like raising from the dead many pure souls who had leaned on the anchor's arms for support in holy defiance of those who had tried to pull them off, for the anchor's arms had protected them, and kept them warm, despite the icy atmosphere which enveloped them: a shout of praise rang through the air when these pious captives found themselves free.

As soon as they espied the cross they leaped upon it and embraced it, and their bodies again were warmed, for the flames of CHARITY, which had so long been smothered, broke forth again as though they longed to caress and console them. The converted philosophers then perceived that the Bark was overrun with vermin, and reptiles of every sort, and that the goose did not even attempt to sweep them up, and they asked her why she did not try to get rid of them.

"You little suspect," she answered, "what they are.

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Why, those snakes, scorpions, vipers, spiders, and wasps, and vermin, that you see crawling or whizzing about the ship, are libellers, backbiters, gossips, and scandal mongers. They are thickest round the helm, and the best thing you can do is to keep away from them, or they will poison your very soul."

A convert was going to put his foot on one of them to try and crush it, but the goose told him to stop, or it would ruin the *sole* of his shoe if it touched it.

St. Peter was looking sorrowfully on, and appeared a little discouraged, for he feared that the goose would not finish the work she had begun, because she was too much attached to her broom, and was afraid to hit them with it for fear of spoiling it. At length a ray of hope came when he heard her exclaim, "I'll roast them."

"Surely," a philosopher exclaimed, "not over CHARITY's flames."

"Indeed not," replied the goose, "they would smother them if they touched them; but I'll make them roast one another, for there are plenty of faggots to be found amongst them. And I'll gather them up with this pitchfork, their own device."

The goose no sooner laid her hand upon it than they began stinging and biting her to get it from her.

"You shall have it," said the goose, as she pierced them through with it, and doubled them up in a heap. "You shall have it, I say, as soon as I can give you a little light."

The devil happened just then to be passing by them with a pipe in his mouth. The goose with the pitchfork gave it a knock, and it fell on the venomous heap, which was instantly ablaze. It was no sooner on fire than every-

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body on board seemed to breathe with a sense of relief, until it went out, and then disappointment was depicted on every face, for what did they behold but any quantity of snakes', scorpions', vipers', and other reptiles' tails, which had not been consumed. Everybody looked towards the goose for an explanation, who wrinkled her brows as she shook her wings.

"It is not my fault," said she; "I did my best to burn them, but it only proves that their tails are fire proof."

It was a grave question then how they should get rid of them; but the devil soon settled it for them. Returning to look for his pipe, and seeing them scattered about, he gathered them quickly up and ran off with them.

"I wonder," asked the converts, "what the devil means to do with them."

"Ah, he keeps them," returned the goose, "to cool the tips of their tongues with; it is a consolation he owes them, because they were his best agents here. No other creatures ever worked for him half so well."

CHAPTER XVII.

The goose then made a raid on the bandits who were holding on to the spoils of sacrilege. She entered the sanctuaries that had been converted into stables, and drove out the horses.

"Cavalry," said she, "is not permitted to enter the port of heaven, they only admit infantry. I expected that the clatter of your horses' hoofs would have waked up

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your CONSCIENCE, but as she is still sleeping I think you must have drugged her."

Whilst the goose was speaking, CONSCIENCE rolled over and gave them a punch, and they tried to drive the goose away by firing stones at her. But she shied them off with her broom so that they fell back upon their heads, which annoyed them exceedingly, because their heads were very sore, for the devils, to oblige them, held them on board by the hair of their heads, because they were in constant danger of slipping off. As they were excommunicated they had nothing to hold on to but the spoils of sacrilege, the very worst hold they could have. So overheated were they with divine wrath, they were constantly blistering their hands; and as they had snapped the cords of OBEDIENCE they could not hold on to the sails, for they shrank from their sacrilegious grasp; neither could they hold on to the anchor's rope, LONGANIMITY, for in their hands it would have been like holding on to a strand of sand. They concluded that the goose must be a devil, and the best way to keep her quiet would be to win her. So, turning towards her with a bewitching smile, they twisted their mustachios, as they said to her, "We are smitten with you. Is there anything we can do for you?"

"Yes," replied the goose, as she made them a bow, "you may drop those spoils, for I wish to clean the ship, as St. Peter is going to receive her Majesty the State, and he is ashamed to have her come on board and see the condition you have helped to put it in."

"Her Majesty the State!" they exclaimed. "Why, we are the State, and are quite satisfied with things as they are, so you had better go home."

"You the State!" the goose cried; "you who have

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forfeited your rights as Christians, and the esteem of nations; you who have taken down the flag of REVERENCE, and made a dust rag of it, and who wipe your feet, too, on the banner of CLEANLINESS!"

"The best thing you can do," they interrupted, trying to cut her short, "is to go home."

"I will not go home," said the goose, "until after I have cleaned St. Peter's Bark, and released him, too. I am not afraid of you or the devils either, who are helping you: they have no power over me so long as I wear this armour," (and she showed them her scapular,) "and I'm not afraid of you either so long as I can wield this weapon." Saying which, she drew out her quill and brandished it before them.

At the sight of the scapular and the quill they were blanched with fear, for they were Italians, aye, although the blood that flowed in their veins was corrupted, they were Italians still, and they knew the power of the scapular and the quill. It was true they had thrust the scapular aside, but they believed in its power in spite of themselves, for faith was not dead in them yet. The sight of the quill made them tremble too, and struck them with awe, for it had once been wielded by Italian hands with a force and majesty that shed a ray of glory over Italy. In by-gone days with the quill alone the Italians had dazzled the world, and had led the noblest minds captive to their country, where they willingly bowed down and acknowledged its supremacy. That power of wielding the pen was given them when their faith was strong, and their hearts brimful of courage and loyalty, but its magic power was taken from them on the day when they became slaves, and made a mockery of reli-

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gion, and set up licence in the place of liberty. Yet they never could forget its former sway. Seeing that the sight of it made them thoughtful, the goose added:

"You are St. Peter's children, whom he once fostered, and on whom he lavished his affections. How have you returned his paternal solicitude? When you saw him betrayed and abandoned you took advantage of his helplessness, and came down upon him, and attacked him like robbers and assassins. You murdered your royal brothers too, who tried to protect him from your rapacity and avarice. You seized on his estates, drove his children from their homes, and forced him into a prison. Why did you not attempt these crimes when the French were here with bayonets to receive you? Don't tell me; we all know the reason of your hanging fire. Tall talk about Italian unity and clap-trap of that kind is of no avail to hide your poltroonery: *cowardice*, *ingratitude*, and *treason* are written on your faces, graven on your foreheads."

Stung by these words, the Sardinian bandits gave the devils a beseeching look, hoping they would do something to hush the goose; but the devils only shook their heads and appeared thoughtful, while the goose resumed:

"God has been patient long enough, and I now warn you that unless you drop those spoils you cling to so tenaciously, I mean to call His wrath down upon you."

At this threat the devils entreated the bandits to surrender, for they feared that God was with the goose; but Satan himself could not induce them to give up the spoils, and the devils, pretending to wax angry with them for their obstinacy, let go of their hair and left them to themselves, to show them how dependent they were upon

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them. The bandits, seeing that the devils had let go of them, and that there was no helping hand near to encourage and protect them, in a fit of despair gathered up the spoils, and leaping upon their steeds, jumped overboard, where they found the devils grinning, and standing with outstretched arms to receive them. After an affectionate embrace the devils jumped up behind them in their saddles, and held them tightly around the waist, as they started off at a gallop down the broad road, where there was neither barrier nor wall to impede their progress, and at the end of which lay the yawning mouth of hell. The crew, seeing them going ahead at such a rapid pace, took pity on the beasts, and halloed out to them to spare their horses, as there was no need of running them to death, since their reward was guaranteed them. They never stopped to reply, but spurred their horses on, as they unfurled their banners, on which was inscribed, "*Avante semper Savoia.*"

When St. Peter saw where they were going at such a rapid rate, he rushed after them, and tried to save them. His zeal seemed to give him wings, for he soon overtook them, and implored them to drop their sacrilegious spoils, and come back to him, instead of rushing headlong to eternal damnation, spoils and all.

At the sound of St. Peter's voice Conscience awoke, and making up for lost time, began pricking them unmercifully, and prodding their breasts as if with a bayonet thrust. Then they looked imploringly to the devils, beseeching them to keep her quiet. The strongest devil of the lot caught her up in his arms, and strove to rock her to sleep again, but when he found himself unable to hold her, they all fell a-cursing St. Peter for waking her

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up, because their efforts to pacify her only seemed to aggravate her, for every time she punched them with her stick the splinters flew in their faces and nearly blinded them. The devils, to console the bandits for so much pain, and to cheer them on the way, told them that it was God who made this world a vale of tears, but that it would be all right as soon as they reached hell, and that they were not far from it then. Seeing that they could get no relief from the devils, the bandits rushed madly ahead, hoping to outrun St. Peter, but in spite of their speed he kept close upon their heels. As they sped on their way they glanced right and left, this way and that, to see if there was no escape. But, alas! nothing but deep abysses were on every side of them, and there, right in front of them, horror of horrors! lay in full view the bottomless pit of hell. In despair they turned upon St. Peter, and tried to annihilate him by striking him with their combined forces, for the devils whispered to them that if they could destroy him they could return on his Bark, and take possession of it. But St. Peter received with calm indifference the blows which they kept showering upon him until their weapons dropped from sheer exhaustion out of their hands. Then they retreated, and would have tumbled headlong backwards into hell had not the gates been suddenly closed by a woman's hand, when they found themselves again face to face with St. Peter, who with outstretched arms was beseeching them to repent and come back to him. They gazed upon him for a moment, and their hearts were moved towards him, for a recollection of the happy days of childhood flitted before them, recalling to mind, too, that he and his Bark were immortal, for God had promised to

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protect them. The FEAR OF THE LORD then came suddenly upon them, and he brandished his switch over them. They no sooner saw him than they gave the devils an entreating look, and begged them to let go of them. But the devils, instead of loosening their hold, held them tighter round the waist than ever, as they attempted to shake the FEAR OF THE LORD off them, and one of them, trying to drown St. Peter's voice, exclaimed:

"Never retrace your steps, my friends; remember your device, '*Avante semper Savoia.*' It would be such a pity to see dear Italy *disunited* again!"

"Yes," joined in an arch-devil, as he groaned aloud; "there is such sweet union and harmony now everywhere reigning throughout the Italian realm. Recollect, too, all that you have done for the people. See how many of them have risen to fame under your reign. Have they not carried the proud distinction of being the finest street scavengers in the world? You see that the broad road suits the people here best, for it gives them a wide field for the display of their genius in sweeping together mud and dirt. You know besides very well that since you have got possession of Italy, every man, woman, and child feels a great sense of security. Why, *even a corpse* can be carried at night through the streets of Rome without being stoned!* *Such a sense of security was never before known!*"

"Indeed," added an imp, who piped louder than the rest, "you all know very well that a corpse borne through the streets of Rome is as safe now as if it were going

* The remains of Pius IX. were stoned when they were conveyed from St. Peter's Church to St. Lorenzo's. The mob tried to seize the corpse and throw it in the Tiber.

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through hell. No one would attempt to take it from the mourners and throw it in the Tiber."

"No, indeed," responded another imp, coaxingly; "and what a pity it would be to go back and disturb this tranquillity, order, and security, which your patriotism has secured. And just think of all the hard labour and self-sacrifice the people would lose!"

While the devils were trying to persuade the outlaws to remain where they were, St. Peter was imploring God and His Mother to have mercy on them, and make the devils let go, for he saw they were determined to keep possession of them in spite of their awakened Conscience and the Fear of the Lord, which had then got good hold of them. Notwithstanding the many crimes that were weighing heavily upon them, St. Peter believed there was something in their hearts which Satan with all his best endeavours could never uproot. Resolving therefore to put them to the test, he passed fearlessly among them, scattering what the bandits took to be gold and silver coin. The Sardinians imagined for a moment that he was imitating them, and was trying to bribe them to come back to him, as they had been doing to try to get him to come over to them. But they no sooner gathered the precious coin up than they found out their mistake, for it was the miraculous medal St. Peter had used as a last resource for bringing them back to him. In their despair, instead of throwing the medals away, they called on the Mother of God to help them. Then the devils instantly loosened their grip of them, and Piedmont and its deluded followers were saved.

A moment afterwards they came crowding round St. Peter. As they approached him their Conscience ceased

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to prick them, and the FEAR OF THE LORD to flourish his switch over them. They felt like prisoners suddenly released from the keeper's lash and galling chains. St. Peter was so choked with tears as he embraced them that he could hardly utter a word. At length he faltered:

"Children, I have never despaired of you; I have always believed that the love you once had for the Mother of God would save you. Mary has watched over you, and has arrested the arm of God, ready to wreak His vengeance upon you. It was her blessed hand that closed the gates of hell against you."

At these words they fell prostrate, and clung to the feet of St. Peter, entreating his forgiveness. Presently they arose and followed him back to his Bark, like strayed sheep whose shepherd had suffered years of torturing anguish in his efforts to recover them.

On the way, one of them, holding to St. Peter's robes, said, "You must not think, holy Father, that we ever threw stones at the dead when they were carried to their graves."

"I never imagined you did," replied St. Peter, "but you are nevertheless responsible for it all. It was the result of your example. If you rebel from legitimate authority under false but specious reasons, you must not be surprised when the rabble follow your example, and rebel as you did. It all came from drugging your CONSCIENCE and driving away the FEAR OF THE LORD."

They had scarcely reached the Bark when lo! St. Peter's shackles fell off, and no one could find his bed of thorns. They sought for it everywhere, but in vain, until they chanced to look up, and what should they behold but the cross of Savoy floating in the air, as if

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borne by angels carrying it home. As it floated over Piedmont it shone like a bright constellation, shaped like a Grecian cross. Yes, over Piedmont and Savoy it shone, whilst in Rome it continued all soiled and bedraggled, to grieve the hearts of all noble souls. The cross of Savoy was never intended to be raised in Rome above the cross of our Saviour. None other may be raised above it. Even the cross of St. Peter is turned down there, as if to denote its unworthiness to stand beside the cross of Christ. And shall the cross of Savoy ever again be raised above it?

"No, no, never, no," was the answer that rose from every Italian heart. Even the Piedmontese joined in the enthusiastic cry, for they had acknowledged their faults, and confessed their crimes, which were now blotted out. Those odious words, cowardice, ingratitude, and treason, had been effaced from their brows, so that they could hold up their heads with the highest, having at last found courage to do what was right, and meeting their reward in the true and real unification of Italy. The people were of one heart and one mind, and they all acknowledged one King, Christ Jesus, and they crossed their swords, and made a vow, in the name of the living God, to defend His vicar, St. Peter, by becoming knights errant of our Lady, ready to sacrifice their very lives if Italy might thereby be made one in the Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

The ironclads, and the editors of the *violent* American Catholic press, were still at sea, fighting desperately to get possession of the barrels of wealth and prosperity.

A corsair proposed to his comrades to go and see what had become of the old ship, since the ironclads had abandoned it; but they no sooner approached the Bark than they were met by a shower of balls from the American and European moderate artillery, making so much havoc among them that they were forced to beat a precipitate retreat.

"Thunder and blazes!" one of them exclaimed, as soon as he recovered his breath, "I'll be hanged if St. Peter has not been getting some new guns."

They looked at each other in blank astonishment as one of them climbed the rigging to see if the ammunition actually came from that quarter. He no sooner reached the top of the mast than he cried out, "Halloa, down there, draw and quarter us alive if he hasn't been getting a new ship, too. Let's call on him and see what he's up to." And they instantly steered towards him, carrying a flag of truce.

St. Peter, as soon as he saw the corsairs coming to him, began moving his Bark towards them by means of the silent oars. He made every child on board put a hand to an oar and help him. When he got close enough to

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them for his voice to be heard, he cried out, "My long-lost children, I'm so glad to see you steering homewards again."

They were quite taken aback at such a reception. As St. Peter had been getting such heavy guns and a new ship, they expected he would treat them a little stiffly, and they began parleying among themselves.

"He certainly called us his children!"

"He is so elated over his new ship that he must have been taking a drop too much. He don't recognize us."

At length one of the chiefs cried out, "We have only come to take a look at your ship, St. Peter. We will keep our truce, so don't be afraid of us."

"Afraid of you!" exclaimed St. Peter; "I am not afraid of you, but I pity you, and long to embrace you."

They were certain now that he was not all right in his head.

"It is rather you," continued St. Peter, "that have always been afraid of me; but I do not reproach you, for you have never known me, though I am your father, and you are my children, whom many years ago the gipsies stole from me, when you were in your cradle, and too young to remember me. Those same gipsies have brought you up to hate me, by telling you lies about me; but do not believe what they say, for I am your father, who have mourned your loss, and sought you sorrowing night and day these many weary years."

The pirates were now more than ever convinced that St. Peter was out of his mind. But they had no wish to take advantage of him then, because he had spoken to them so kindly, and surrounded as he was by everything that was bright and beautiful, they were drawn

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towards him in spite of themselves. They therefore resolved to make themselves known to him, and then, if he chose that they should be friends, well and good, for they felt as though they should like to make up with him.

"St. Peter," said the chief, addressing him, "I fear that prosperity has affected your brain. You don't appear to know us."

"Alas!" answered St. Peter, looking them full in the face, "I know you only too well."

"Then tell us," they added, "something about ourselves, that we may have a guarantee of your sanity."

"My dear children," replied St. Peter, after a little hesitation, "this is not the time for recrimination. I do not wish to recall the bitter past at the very moment I see you disposed spontaneously to return to me. But you are the pirates of the sea, are you not? who have been committing the most abominable crimes, robbing my sanctuaries, kidnapping my children, and putting them to death."

Here St. Peter paused, while the corsair lowered his eyes and hung his head, as he meekly said, "And yet you call us your children!"

"Yes," interrupted St. Peter, "for my long-lost children you are: you were stolen from me in your childhood by men such as Luther, Calvin, and Melancthon. I could expect nothing better of you after being brought up by such men. I knew how you would turn out, so I have never felt the slightest rancour towards you."

"Then why," interposed the corsair, "have you never spoken to us so kindly before?"

"My language," returned St. Peter, "has always been the same, but it is the first time you have ever heard me,

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for whenever those gipsies saw me approaching you they drove you from me, so that the sound of my voice could not reach you."

For the first time in their lives the pirates' hearts dilated with a sense of joyful relief, and notwithstanding the bitter hatred they had always felt for St. Peter, they were now irresistibly drawn towards him, since in spite of their crimes he declared himself to be their father, and acknowledged them to be his children.

"St. Peter," said the chief, "we would like to come on your Bark, not this time to rob you, but only to examine your ship, which looks so beautiful. We are dying with curiosity to see all over it. We swear by the cross you wear round your neck to do you no injury, and if the State dares to play you a trick, we shall feel much pleasure in knocking her wicked head off for you, and calling it quits."

St. Peter raised his hand to silence the corsair, but the latter took no notice.

"We have vowed to do it in any case," said he, "and have taken an oath on the graves of our fathers to be revenged for her treatment of our ancestors, as well as of ourselves; for all she ever did for either of us was to make targets of us for her guns. And many is the time we could have strangled her had it not been for you. And such has been our spite against you, we have always believed you hated us and protected the State, hoping that she would exterminate us."

"It was the gipsies who taught you that," said St. Peter. "But are you not aware that the State is my lawful spouse, whom it is my duty to protect, for notwithstanding her faithlessness I have always loved her."

"St. Peter," one of the marauders exclaimed, "you

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don't mean to say that you were ever in love with that squinting-eyed, powder-marked, ricketty old jade! We scared her so the other day that she has been trying to come round you, because she needs you, and we heard that you had forgiven her, and had promised to take her back again. Is it true?"

"Certainly," replied St. Peter, "it is true, and I warn you not to molest her, for if you do my crew will protect her, and you will find that although I am disposed to be clement, yet you can force me to be just."

"You have nothing to fear from us now," said a corsair, "as she has not come back to you yet, so let us come on board and examine your ship. But where did you get this beautiful Bark from? that is what puzzles us."

"Why," replied St. Peter, "it is the same that I have always had, but some of my children had covered it up, and made it look more like a saucy old witch riding a camel, than like a ship. They tricked it out and made such a guy of it that no one could judge from its external appearance what it really was, until a little American beggar took pity on me, and came over here, and ripped off the toggery and cleaned it up for me."

"But what did she do with the figure on it? We used to call it 'Aunt Sally,' and took turns in having a pot shot at it."

"That was the way they had rigged up the mast," answered St. Peter. "But thanks to America, we are rid of all that, and you now see my Bark as it should have always been kept, and as I hope you will help to keep it too when you come on board my ship."

"Can we not come on at once?" they asked.

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"Not with those clothes on," said St. Peter. "You must change them first; you could hardly expect me to permit you to come on my Bark, and sit at my table, wearing clothes dyed with the blood of your brothers and my sons. But jump in the guard boats, and my crew will help you change your suits at once, and then, after you are washed and dressed, you may come on board and taste of my wine and bread."

The pirates then began parleying among themselves. St. Peter could only now and then catch a few words, such as, "I for one am tired with working so hard for hell, let's give it up." "What a beautiful ship he has." "And the people on it, too, don't look a bit stuck up." "And what nice perfumery they use; why, I can smell it over here."

At length one of them ejaculated, "By Jupiter and Bacchus, let's go ahead." And then, crying out to St. Peter, he asked, "Where did you tell us to go, holy Father, to get washed and dressed?"

St. Peter pointed to the guard boats, where the crews were beckoning them to hasten on, as they were ready to assist them. While the crews were preparing them, and doing their best to get the snarls out of their hair without hurting them, one of the converted philosophers took upon himself to explain to the corsairs where the light on St. Peter's Bark came from. The corsairs listened for a while without understanding a word he said, but they soon became inattentive, and as the philosopher insisted upon giving them a long explanation, the corsairs became impatient, and one of them finally cried out:

"Dry up over there, and don't bother us; so long as we can see we don't care a cuss where the light comes from."

The philosopher, upon hearing those words, bowed his

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head, and prayed that God would give him a little of the corsair's good sense.

When the corsairs were ready to come on board, St. Peter stood at the helm to receive them with as much joy as if each of them had been a prodigal son returning to his father's arms. But they found no elder brothers there to complain of the kind reception given them by their father, for St. Peter's children hailed them like brothers who, having been stolen away from them, had after much suffering found their way home again. The first thing St. Peter's children wanted to ascertain was, whether they had the heart of the age. The corsairs told them they had never been able to get possession of it, since it was a great deal too conceited and puffed up to have anything to do with them. St. Peter was satisfied from their answer that they had never seen it, for he knew it was not puffed up, but was cold, hard, and shrivelled up. The chief of the band then wanted to know if they should burn their ships, as they had no further use for them.

"No, no," was the quick answer of St. Peter. "You may need them for my protection. I wish you to keep a good look out, and if you see any of my ironclads coming back, and attempting to defend my Bark, I give you leave to fire on them."

"When we started on our way here," interrupted the chief, "they appeared to be having a jolly time of it, for having got in the barrels they were fighting for, they were letting off fireworks. They were the very strangest ones we have ever seen. Instead of sending up rockets that shoot out stars and serpents when they burst, we could see heads, arms, legs, headless bodies, and feet, indeed, we can't tell half we saw."

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One of them here cried out, "I saw a demijohn."

"Yes," screamed another, "and the fireworks only went out as they dropped into hell."

This bit of news created a commotion on board. The goose fainted, for she accused herself of being the innocent cause of the mischief. St. Peter, too, was deeply grieved, but quickly recovering from the shock this news had given him, he gave the converted corsairs a correct version of the facts, hoping it would be a warning to them never to abandon him in the pursuit of wealth, lest they too should encounter a similar fate. He requested his friendly corsairs to pray for them, that they might rest in peace. One unlettered pirate, who had never but once seen a baptismal font without laying hand on whatever he could find round and about it, asked St. Peter if it could be possible for their souls to rest in peace, seeing that they went into hell in pieces.

"I have only your word for it," St. Peter replied, "which is not sufficient proof, so we will say a *Miserere*, that God may have mercy on them, and an occasional *Te Deum*, that they are no longer defending me."

The "Branch" at that moment presented a peculiar appearance; heads could everywhere be seen peeping out between the mottoes and the banners and underneath the flags; every face wore a look of wonderment, as though every one wanted to ask what had become of the old ship, and where the new one had sprung from. They all recognized St. Peter as the captain, and were all the more astonished by his abandonment of his old ship, because they had heard him speak so loudly in favour of it. They were also surprised to see that the corsairs had thrown down their pistols and bowie knives, and appeared per-

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fectly at home on board the beautiful ship, from which sounds of merriment were everywhere rising. Many years had passed since JOY had been seen gamboling so playfully on the Bark. Whilst the sails of FAITH and HOPE were furled, that of CHARITY had been unfolded, and was now wrapped around the mast, so as to make it appear like a majestic figure arrayed in GLORY. The olive branch, too, was entwined round the mast like a spreading vine, whose branches afford a beneficent shade to those who sit beneath it. The result was something more than PEACE, it was REPOSE.

The Bark was now thoroughly cleaned, and the passengers and crew seemed animated by feelings such as those which thrilled the heart of David when he danced before the ark. St. Peter himself appeared to have forgotten the burden of his charge, and had he not felt the necessity of restraining JOY, he might have danced himself; but he caught the lambkin up in his arms, and tied him fast to the binnacle, so as to keep his spirits down a little, lest he should skip himself off the ship.

Some of his children had already climbed up in the olive branch, and were nestled in it close to the mast. They were seeking a solitary place of rest, while others were trying to imitate the lambkin's gait, and went skipping here and there, occasionally changing their step by dropping on their knees and kissing the deck, as though they would embrace the face of their God, which they saw reflected in it. Many could be seen kneeling by the spring, trying to get a drink, and those who succeeded became so inebriated that they went and leaned for support on the anchor's arms, by the side of those whose eyes were steadily fixed upon the cross, longing to embrace it, for

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the sake of Him who had sanctified it, and whose hand they could now see reflected on it. For when the sail of FAITH was furled, the light from the dove that shone upon it reflected the right hand of God upon the cross, and it was the shadow of that hand that drew them to it, and made them so eager to embrace it.

Some of the passengers were promenading the deck, arm in arm with the reformed corsairs, and relating to one another their mutual joy at being together after having been separated so long, when all eyes for an instant were drawn towards the stern, where a beautiful sight suddenly broke upon them. It was no other than her gracious Majesty the State, daintily draped in folds of soft white cashmere. The recovered children mistook her for the Blessed Mother of God, come down from heaven to pay them a visit; for if her arm had encircled a child she would have resembled our Lady of Victories. The crew told the converted corsairs who the lady really was. None of them would however believe the statement until the crew showed them clearly that no greater change had taken place in themselves than in the State. St. Peter, too, was struck with the change in her Majesty, for she now appeared like a victorious queen, who had conquered every vice and put on every virtue. After bowing and kissing St. Peter's ring, and congratulating him upon the corsairs' return, she said to him, "I desire, with your Holiness' leave, to visit the interior of your Bark."

"Madam," replied St. Peter, "that privilege depends more upon yourself than upon me. I shall be delighted to open the door for you, hoping you will find it wide enough to let you in. If it is, I trust whenever you approach the tabernacle you will offer up a prayer for me. You will

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find the tabernacle at the mast, in the centre of the ship; it is there you must go to refresh yourself."

"Can your Holiness not accompany me?" inquired her Majesty.

"You may find me there," said St. Peter, "for there is no other place where I so much delight to be. But I have so many distracting cares up here, that it does not always depend upon my will to visit the spot just whenever I please."

"But pray tell me," asked the State, "is it true that the interior of your Bark is only occupied by monks and nuns?"

"Oh dear, no," replied St. Peter; "it is not the gown that makes the saint, it is the union of the heart with God. You will find all classes there."

St. Peter then leaned over, and was going to open the door, when two little monkeys jumped nimbly up to the keyhole, as if the devil had thrown them there for fun, because they instantly doubled up their legs, and turned in their paws, and twisted their tails, until they imitated to perfection a pair of keys, and then lay down over the keyhole as if they were going to sleep. A second more and you would have supposed them dead, they grew so stiff and corpselike.

The State was very much taken aback, as you may imagine; so much so that she could hardly draw her breath. After a pause she whispered, "I beseech you, dear, good St. Peter, to remove them."

"I cannot," said St. Peter, "without your help."

"Oh," sighed the State, turning away her head, "I would not touch them for the world."

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"Try," said St. Peter, "and see if you can open the door with them."

"It is no time to jest now," resumed the State; "I am really serious. I wish to enter the interior of your Bark, and what a ridiculous figure I should make trying to open the door myself with those monkeys."

"What you say is very true, ma'am," replied St. Peter, in a very low tone, "and you can now see what a ridiculous figure you have been making of yourself for several centuries."

"St. Peter," moaned the State, "I thought you were too generous to reproach me with a fault that I have confessed, and for which I have received absolution."

"I am not reproaching you," said St. Peter, "but I really wish to let you into the interior of my Bark, and I cannot open the door until we get rid of these monkeys, which you see are right on the locks. CONTRITION and CONFESSION are not sufficient: you must get a remission of the temporal punishment due to the sin you committed in pretending to be able to open the door with them. You require an INDULGENCE. If you had gained that the devil could not have stepped in and brought the monkeys with him. I can open the door easily enough when it is not barred up, but I cannot remove those obstacles unless you assist me."

"What am I to do, St. Peter, to get rid of them?"

St. Peter gave her a prayer to which a plenary indulgence was attached. She had no sooner made an act of contrition, and repeated the prayer, than the devil came and picked the monkeys up, and said, with a nonchalant air, "If you have done with these keys here, I'll take them, for we need them on the Branch."

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St. Peter told him he was welcome to them, as her Majesty was sick of them, and they were of no use to him. He then leaned over and was going to open the door again, when lo, it was covered with cocks and hens.

"This is too much," the State exclaimed, as she retreated a few steps. "If the penalties due to my sins are to loom up before me like this, you will never be able to let me in. But I thought the indulgence was a plenary one, and would remit the whole temporal debt; there must have been in it some defect."

"The indulgence was perfect," answered St. Peter, "but the penitential works on your part must also be perfect and complete. If you will be good enough to examine them you will find the defect is there. In making them you must have left out all these, which is very serious, for they represent the different sects bred and propagated by the stealing of the cock. You cannot enter into the interior of my Bark until you are truly contrite for it."

The State bit her lips, as she drew a long breath.

"I can be sorry for the cocks," she said, "but I certainly had nothing to do with the hens."

"Ah," replied St. Peter, "but they are the natural consequence, and would be sure to follow; you are as much to blame for one as the other, so I beg you will do penance."

The State took the prayer and began repeating it again, but before she had finished it the cocks and the hens disappeared as if they had been borne miraculously away. St. Peter had hardly time to put his keys in the locks when the door appeared to open of itself, and the State, whose face now radiated with peace and joy, passed in.

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When the philosophers saw the door close upon her, one of them remarked to St. Peter that as things looked now, the State was lost in the Church.

"No, no," quickly interposed St. Peter, "that would be wrong. The State should never be *lost* in the Church, she should always be *found* in the Church."

"I came to inquire of you," returned the philosopher, "what has become of the goose since she cleaned your Bark. I do not think she has ever been thanked, or has received the slightest reward."

"I thought," answered St. Peter, "that I saw my children who have abandoned my Bark paying her off."

"Oh, no," spoke several at a time, "they did nothing but abuse her and throw stones at her."

"Well," answered St. Peter, "if the goose did it for the glory of God, to suffer for Him is the highest reward she can ask. That is a mystery, my children, that I give you this evening to meditate on. I think you skipped that lesson, but you will have to learn it by heart before I can admit you into the interior of my Bark."

St. Peter could see since the State had entered they were all desirous of following her example.

CHAPTER XIX.

When her Majesty entered the interior of the Bark she saw an angel waiting to conduct her, for the door no sooner closed upon her than she found herself in the obscurity of a starless night; the only light perceptible was that which radiated from the angel's face, and by it alone they

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groped their way, until the soft glimmers of an early dawn began breaking in upon them. No sound of human voices or of nature could be heard. Everything was as hushed and still as if they had entered the realms of the dead. The State, wearied of the stillness, was about to speak, when she was startled by the sound of her own voice, which rang through the place like the tramp of cavalry in an echoing cave. The way soon became rough and mountainous, and her Majesty, dreading to climb the rugged heights, was about to retreat a few steps, as if the better to view them, when the angel seized her hand, and pointed to a crevice in the rock, through which a bright light could be distinctly seen. As they came nearer to it the crevice widened, and when they reached it she found a luminous path, and instead of being obliged to climb the mountain, it was rent in twain, and held apart by angels' hands, for them to pass through it. The train of her Majesty's robe had barely swept over the last crag than the mountain closed, and a most delicious plain lay before her covered with fields of sheaves and waving wheat, in which were numerous gleaners labouring in a sunlight that gave a warmth which was not oppressive, and a light which did not dazzle by its brightness.

The State raised her eyes to look at that spiritual sun, which she beheld shining through an azure veil woven of ethereal mists, and which was held extended over the plain by the hands of angels stationed on the distant mountain peaks.

This celestial veil was quadrangular in shape, and its long drooping ends lay on the lap of the neighbouring hills, until they were moved by the breezes, which, playing around the mountain tops, sent from the heights

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above a refreshing gale to the labourers in the plain beneath. Her Majesty's soul soon partook of the influence with which she was surrounded, the very atmosphere breathing peace and security. The only noise to be heard was the rustling of the sheaves, and the whispering of the breeze as it passed by the waving ears of wheat. The gleaners seldom raised their eyes and never spoke; they seemed absorbed in thought, as if in the midst of their toil they sought to catch the accents of a soft still voice that was speaking to their hearts. They were arrayed in flowing robes, confined at the waist by mystical girdles, on which the sunbeams, gently falling through the azured veil, made them appear as if their loins were girded with the choicest solar rays.

Each of them carried a cross, but they bore it some one way, some another way. Not a few carried theirs like a knapsack on their shoulders, others kept theirs suspended at their sides, like a sword, while others again wore it in the manner of a shield across the breast; but none were seen to draggle them along, or to allow them to touch the ground, for they all carried their own as if it were their greatest prize.

Of a sudden a sound vibrated through the air, like the soft tones of a silvery bell. It was the call of DUTY. The gleaners instantly dropped their sheaves, and with rapid pace hastened away, and were soon concealed by the neighbouring hills. They no sooner disappeared than the sun, too, changed its course, and moved in the direction the gleaners had taken, as though its beams were following them. The State made an involuntary start, as though she too would like to follow, for despite the natural beauty

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of the scene, a sense of loneliness stole over her when those who gave it life and animation were gone.

The gleaners had not observed her Majesty's presence, but the angels who had ushered her through the crevice of the mountain began whispering the glad tidings through every recess of the interior world, which sent a thrill of rapture through every soul, and all nature seemed to palpitate with joy at the thought that the heart of her Majesty the State was about to beat again in unison with that of the Church.

Horses white as snow could now be seen galloping on every side from out the recesses of the far-off hills, or leaping fearlessly down the rugged heights, while the mountains reverberated their neighings, which were mingled with the shrill cries of eagles, who were swiftly winging their flight towards the State, as if determined that NOBILITY should not outstride LOYALTY in devotion to her Majesty. The eagles won the day, for they were the first to greet the State. After paying her regal homage, they soared above her head, where they grouped together and formed a most royal canopy, while the steeds took their places in semicircles on either side of her.

Stalwart lions then came rushing down the hills, roaring as if enraged with shame to be behind the others. After crouching at her Majesty's feet, they arose and took their stand beside the steeds, beneath the eagles' wings, showing that COURAGE was the willing and natural attendant on LOYALTY and NOBILITY.

The State began to feel a sense of security that she never before had known, and raising her eyes to heaven in token of praise, she beheld the sunbeams darting towards

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her, as if trying to keep pace with the returning gleaners, who were advancing hither with rapid strides, accompanied by shepherds and their flocks, which were gamboling by their side, while the whole welkin rang with a strange melody, as if nature sought relief in giving vent to joy.

The eagles first rent the air with their cries, that resounded over the plains and through the hills, like the first clarion notes of martial music, accompanied by the neighing of the steeds and the roaring of the lions; yet there was not a discordant note, for they all breathed in harmony, so that the bleating of the lambs could be distinctly heard, as also the buzzing of the bees, advancing in swarms, and even the murmurs of the breeze as it rushed through the sheaves in its haste to fan the brow of her Majesty.

When the queen bee reached the State, instead of alighting at her feet, it flew directly in her face, where it placed a drop of honey on her Majesty's lips, that brought a blush of pleasure to her cheeks, for she felt that the queen bee had given her the sweet kiss of peace.

The bees then formed, beyond the shepherds and their flocks, a circular platform, at the end of which gradually arose, as one bee alighted upon the other, a high impregnable wall that in the soft sunlight appeared of solid gold. Her Majesty's attention was drawn from them to the shepherds and gleaners, who, as they approached her, bowed before her without uttering a word, but the tears of joy that sparkled in their eyes expressed more eloquently than words their devotion and loyalty. Her attention for awhile was so absorbed in them that she did not perceive how the bees were hovering about her person,

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forming themselves in beautiful devices on her robes and clustering around her waist, until they formed as it were a breast-plate of gold. As soon as she perceived them she was afraid to move, lest a tremor might drive them away, but placing her hand down gently upon them, as if to caress them, she discovered they clung to her robes as though they had been woven in with the threads.

Never had she felt herself arrayed more royally, never had her beauty appeared more dazzling, never until now had she felt herself more the queen. Around her she beheld the gleaners, with eyes cast downwards, listening to catch once more the sound of the soft still voice, and she tried to silence the beatings of her own heart in hopes of hearing it herself, when it instantly spoke to her, and told her why the bees were there, and her Majesty burst into tears, such as she never before had shed: they were the generous and grateful outpourings of her heart towards the hard labouring poor who belonged to the fold of Christ, for she then saw them about her person as God intended they should dwell. They were to be her platform, her fortifications, her breast-plate, and embroidery. Her own virtues were to be her diadem, and her nobility should be her canopy, her watch towers, and her cavalry. That a true nobility would never prevent those to whom the State owed her protection and support from hovering around her person, and sharing with them the happiness of expressing in her presence their patriotism and loyalty; for though they could not show it in their plumage, their equipages, and bearings, yet it was just as genuine in their hearts as in those that beat under all that gorgeous panoply.

The State remained for a few moments wrapt in her

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sense of security, when the sunbeams gradually withdrew as a cloud arose from beneath the horizon's verge, and floated towards them until it reached the edge of the celestial veil, where it halted, as if to bid defiance to peace, order, and security. Instantly there darted from it flashes of lightning resembling the fangs of serpents, which were as quickly followed by peals of deafening thunder. There came another flash, and then a sound as of the rushing of many waters* pouring down the hills like endless cataracts into the plain.

The eagles spread their wings with a tremulous flutter, as if eager to protect their charge, while the bees knit themselves closer together so as to make a more compact mass. The horses and lions separated into battalions; some of them rallied in closer array round her Majesty, while the rest scaled the wall and sprang down before it, so as to break the force of the water when it came dashing against it. The shepherds and gleaners seized their crosses, as passengers would life preservers when their ship has been struck at sea, while their flocks looked up to them confidingly, as if unconscious that harm would overtake them when their guardians were near.

For a moment the State felt they must all be submerged by the waters that came pouring down like gulf streams in every direction, but when she beheld the calm look of confiding trust depicted on the features of those about her, her momentarily slumbering faith awoke amidst the din of the storm, and she arose to meet the hurricane resplendent in majesty, as she stood with head erect, bidding defiance to the scourge of empires, from her trust in God.

* Afflictions, scourges, misfortunes.

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The plain that was spread before them was now flooded, but the platform on which her Majesty stood arose like a ship above it, and kept rising higher and higher until the mountain tops were submerged. The water could then be seen splashing here and there above the walls, like waves against a rugged granite shore, when suddenly the State and her cortège were enveloped in the deepest gloom, and their ears were deafened by the violence of the waves, which gave vent to their rage in deep moans, chafing impotently in presence of a power able to resist them, while the only light that could be seen was that which flashed from the eyes of the eagles, stationed like watch towers above the wall.

Though the platform on which her Majesty stood began to rock and sway to and fro, it never for an instant tottered. The State then sat down to rest in a reclining posture with the security of a child in its cradle when rocked by its mother, and the roaring winds resounded in her ears like the lullaby of childhood's days. Feeling weary, she closed her eyes and dropped to sleep, and slept peacefully until the platform ceased to rock. She then awoke, and beheld the sun shining, and the golden walls that the bees had formed crumbling, and forming little mounds like hives upon the sea, where they danced for a time upon the waves, and then scattered, to wing their flight upwards until they alighted on the celestial veil, which then appeared bespangled with stars at midday.

Her Majesty awaking gazed about her, and saw that her cortège had dispersed, some of her attendants appearing even to have floated miles away. There was no land in sight, and the waters suddenly lay down, as though they had seen their God and were afraid, and every living

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thing that was moving on their surface became breathlessly still. The gleaners were kneeling on their crosses, and were leaning over looking into the water, as her Majesty had seen St. Peter's children do on the deck of his Bark, and for the first time she became conscious that she too had been all the while upon a cross. She instantly knelt down upon it, and following the example of the rest, she gazed fixedly on the water, when her whole soul became suddenly transfixed, for deep down beneath the placid surface of the sea she saw a figure which she knew could be no other than the Sun of the inner world, the Son of Man Himself. She had not been able to distinguish it before on account of its excessive brightness, even as it shone through the azure veil, but in the water she could behold it as through a glass darkly, and her soul became so enraptured with its transcendant beauty, that, clasping her hands in adoration, she exclaimed, "My Lord and my God!" It was the first time her soul had ever tasted real delight in rendering homage to her Maker, and while gazing in ecstasy upon her Sovereign's features, her attention was attracted to the veil that was reflected in the water, with the bees clinging to it, which in the sky appeared bespangled with stars: but in the water they looked like tiny mirrors, in each of which could be seen reflected the face of God; and she heard a low voice, as though the depths of the ocean whispered to her, and said, "You can always see My face in the grateful smile that comes from the poor man's heart."

As she continued to gaze upon it her soul was seized with an irrepressible longing to approach her God, and forgetting everything else, she was about to plunge into the mighty deep, when her hand was seized by her guar-

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dian angel, whose touch aroused her to the fact that the face she therein beheld was but a faint shadow of the Divinity itself. Raising her eyes to heaven in the hope of seeing it there more distinctly, she beheld the celestial veil draping itself around the God-like figure, and the light gradually decreasing, as does the sunshine at the close of a bright summer's day, and as the veil wrapt itself around Him the surface of the waters moved, as if by a gentle breeze, which wafted forward those who were reposing on the bosom of the deep; and angels could be seen trying to arouse them, for like wearied children on a journey, they had fallen asleep.

The day declined, and the night came on in proportion as the veil wrapt itself round the divine figure, and kept draping itself about Him more and more, as if moved by the wings of the gentlest wind, until at length it was finished, and was fastened to His breast by a flaming heart, which made it appear like the Godhead clothed in the stars, that vied with each other in shining; some of them shot forth meteoric rays, still the burning heart was as distinctly discerned among the stellar rays, and the beauteous outlines of the divine face could be dimly seen through the spangled veil.

Her Majesty then observed that they were rapidly approaching an undulating shore, over which shone what appeared in the distance to be an illuminated rose, by the rays of which the far-off landscape could be distinctly seen, as it lighted up the tops of the snow-capped peaks and also the face of the waters. All drowsiness now fled from every eyelid, as they watched that mystical rose descending to the earth, which it no sooner touched than it was concealed by the distant hills, and then appeared

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like a wandering star hastening through the vales to meet the wearied travellers when they reached the shore.

The State arose, and stood upon the cross that was bearing her along, hoping by advancing one step to be able to draw that mysterious light nearer to her, when suddenly from behind a neighbouring cliff appeared, with a meek and smiling grace, a lovely maiden enrobed in all the insignia of royalty, accompanied by a train of angels. A moment more and they reached the shore, where the Virgin Mother and Queen was surrounded by her children, whom she greeted with a joyful smile. By a simple and almost childlike gesture of her hand she signalled the royal cortège to withdraw, when the eagles started in a rapid flight towards the mountain crests, while the lions and horses ranged themselves like sentinels along the strand; but the bees that had not alighted on the celestial veil nestled beneath the Virgin's train, making it appear as if it were lined with the most lustrous gems; while the gleaners and shepherds, followed by their flocks, wended their way through circuitous paths, leaving the State under the protection of the Queen of Heaven.

The State no sooner felt the benign influence of that maternal protection than her bosom was filled with a double sense of security, which, had she not experienced, she never could have believed existed on earth for a being who wielded a sceptre and wore a crown.

Already she had experienced the joy of a soul reconciled with its God, but knowing the instability of her character, she was now drawn towards Him with a deeper and more tenderly grateful devotion, when she found He had given her a refuge from His wrath, and raising her eyes to heaven in token of thanks, she beheld the divinity in

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starry array, far above the highest mountain's top, watching over the night. Falling at the Virgin Queen's feet, she besought her with all the earnestness of an impatient child imploring its mother to take it in her arms and bear it to its father leagues away. The Queen of Heaven threw upon her a look of tenderness, which as much as said, "Patience, dear child, and I will lead you to Him." Filled with confidence, the State arose, still clinging to the Virgin's robes, for fear of losing her, and missing her way, and so perhaps never reaching Him whom her soul sought, for she felt that every step she took beside her was leading her nearer to Him.

After crossing hillocks and passing through winding paths, they reached the vale that the wearied called their resting place, for they had no spot on earth they called their own. They lived here below like exiles, who were longing for their King to call them to their country and their home.

The Virgin Queen went softly through this silent vale as a mother passes through a chamber where her babes are sleeping. At length they reached a bower where a group of wearied exiles lay reposing, their heads resting upon stones. The angels with their wings brought the grape vines low, and the Queen of Heaven leaning over, took the brimming fruit, out of which the juice oozed at the slightest touch, and placed it to her children's lips. Leaving the bower, they traversed an open space, and found others sleeping on a cliff, sipping honey from the honeycomb, which projected out of the crevices of the rocks. The drops that fell from their lips the bees themselves gathered up and placed on their famished lips again. Those who could not reach the crevices out of

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which the honey flowed, because they were lying with their heads too low, the angels gathered moss and brought it to the Queen of Heaven, who placed it under their heads to raise them, as a mother would a pillow for her children in their cradle. Passing thence, they came to a lonely mound, where they found others lying with their lips to the ground, out of which the slightest pressure drew most delicious dew, that tasted like the sweetest milk coming out of the bosom of the earth. The heavenly Queen left with them a cohort of angels to cover them with their wings. They then began ascending a steep and rugged height. The State did not feel wearied, for her whole being was filled with a sweet repose, and she felt borne upwards by an unseen force, as though she were carried in her mother's arms. Before they reached the top they found it covered with eternal snows, on which the exhausted travellers lay, trying to refresh their wearied souls. The icicles that hung above them, melted by the contact of their breath, and trickled down in drops of crystal water on their lips, parched with an unquenchable thirst. The angels stationed themselves about them, fanning them with their wings, while the heavenly Mother and her Majesty the State retraced their steps until they were midway down the steep, where they paused on a rock that projected out of the mountain's side, around whose cragged edges the eagles had built their nests. The State no sooner touched that rock than she felt that it was henceforth to be her throne, her couch, her place of rest, and she threw herself upon it with a lighter heart than she had ever done on beds of down.

The Mother Maid then apparently withdrew, and the State, looking round her to see where she had gone, espied

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the eaglets peeping through the eagles' wings, as if tenderly watching over her, like infant sentinels ready to cry at the approach of danger. Raising her eyes, she fixed them in adoration on the figure of the Godhead suspended in the firmament, and her heart began beating wildly, for she felt He was approaching her. She instantly arose, sank on her knees, and bowed her head; but raising her eyes again, anguish filled her soul, for she saw the figure of the Divinity descending as if He had passed her by without a thought, and she now beheld Him far below her moving through the vale, letting His flaming Heart shine in the bowers, throwing its light and heat upon the snow-capped hills, then letting it fall again, where it beamed on the rocky couches where the weary exiles lay.

As its rays fell upon their faces they lighted up with smiles, as if while sleeping their hearts kept vigil, and were conscious of the presence of their heavenly King. Her Majesty the State now watched with almost breathless longing every motion of that Heart, yet it turned not towards her, and she felt abandoned and alone, and her own heart began to sink within her, as though it were clenched by an inexorable hand, for her many crimes arose suddenly before her, and seemed to form an eternal barrier between her and that for which her soul most craved. It had never before been given her to feel the extent of her iniquities, and as they one by one passed in rapid review before her, she thought of the example the Queen of Heaven had just given her when she saw her watching over her children, and that recollection smote her to the heart's core, for her own behaviour towards them had been so unlike it. Instead of tendering them a helping hand to procure them a shelter and strengthening food,

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she had hewn down the grape vines to their very roots, and torn with ruthless hands the honey from out of the rocks, and had thrown hot ashes on the bosom of the earth to dry its milk, and with burning lava melted down the cooling heights where they were wont to lie to refresh themselves. "Yes, yes," a loud voice echoed through her ears, "you have done all this when you tried to usurp My kingdom upon earth, and destroy the channels through which these graces flow. And you even tried to strip My children of their virginal robes, and send them blushing through the streets." As these words resounded through her soul her tears like torrents flowed, and she wrung her hands in despair, fearing that her crimes had separated her for ever from her God, whom she now beheld traversing the earth, as if His delight was to dwell among the children of men. Her grief was now so poignant that it seemed greater than she could bear, when through her tears she chanced to spy, winding its way around a distant snow-capped peak, that hallowed light that had welcomed them as they approached the shore. "Mary Mother! Mary Mother!" instinctively she cried, like a sobbing child. No sooner were those sweet words echoed through the vale than that light shone on her Majesty's face, and her tears were dried. But a shade of disappointment passed over her again, for she no longer beheld the Divine figure in the vale. She wondered, too, whence came so suddenly those benign rays with which she was surrounded, for everything about the rock on which she knelt could be distinctly seen. She saw the eaglets holding up their heads with sparkling eyes, as though they had suddenly been filled with joy, and they forced a smile from her sorrow-stricken face. Wearied with

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watching, longing, and weeping, she leaned over as if to lie down upon the rock again, and her head sank heavily, not on the hard cold stone, but on a downy texture. She shrank not, neither did she speak, but her heart melted within her, and overflowed with joy, as she nestled her head in her pillow, which she knew was the Godhead's feet.

All weariness instantly forsook her, and a preternatural strength took its place, yet she durst not move, fearing that her Beloved might escape her. Slowly and softly she withdrew her sceptre, which she had concealed in her bosom, and tried to place it beneath His feet. Gladly would she have given it in exchange for such a resting place, but the sceptre cleaved to her hand like a gift that God Himself had given her, and one too that He wished her to retain. At that same instant a flood of light burst through her soul, and the whole divine plan of governing the universe was laid bare before her, like the instantaneous solving of some great mysterious problem, and for the first time she could fully realize the superiority of the jurisdiction of the Vicar of Christ over her own. It was then clear to her that her sovereignty was not a position whose height could take her out of obedience to the Church's teachings, and yet she was as much bound by them as the meanest of her subjects, and she humbly bowed to the divine dispensation, for she shuddered at the very thought of ever having dared to usurp the power of the Vicar of Him at whose feet she now lay, and of having put herself up as the source of spiritual jurisdiction, thus trying to make Christ's authority subordinate to her own, and dictating to it as though it were her servant instead of her Lord.

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The roots were now laid bare before her, out of which spring the discords and dissensions that desolate empires and shake the stability of thrones, and she felt that with her own hands she had been fostering those roots by leading her subjects into barren lands, and forcing them to feed on husks and brambles, which, instead of engendering in their souls LOYALTY, DEVOTION, INDUSTRY, and COURAGE, had sown the seeds in them of treason, rebellion, sensuality, and sloth. Yet in spite of her keen remorse a sweet peace had taken possession of her soul. She felt that she had offended a King whose majesty and power were only surpassed by His goodness, and that He was now offering her forgiveness in proportion to her guilt. She no longer regarded her sovereignty as a special favour of the divine will, accompanied as it was with its inevitable train of temptations and responsibilities, but realized that the beggar standing at her gate was more an object of envy than herself, if he but possessed the knowledge and love of God, his indigence shielding him from the almost irresistible allurements that beset the paths of royalty.

While these thoughts rushed through her mind the celestial veil began spreading itself again as a gauze-like canopy over the mountain tops athwart the valley, but no sunbeams were shining through it, and the bees, too, had flown away. The State's attention was attracted by the veil, and raising her head she looked about her in dismay, for her Lord had left her as silently and as mysteriously as He had come. But His visit had strengthened and consoled her, and though He had hid Himself from her, she felt that He had not abandoned nor forgotten her, and she placed her ear closer to the rock, hoping to hear His soft

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still voice, instead of which she heard a murmuring through the air as of all nature moaning, when, quick as the lightning flash, the eagles left their nests and soared above her, apparently conscious of the approaching danger. Athwart the veil could now be seen a livid light, like that which glows from volcanic flames. That light was quickly followed by streams of fire, whose course seemed directed towards the rock on which she stood, but the veil bade defiance to the flames lurking about it on every side, until their force was spent by their efforts to consume it. The fire no sooner ceased to burn than the elements seemed to shriek with rage that their strongest force should have been defeated by a piece of gauze. The State heard once more the weird sound of the ocean's roar, when lashed by furious gales that dash its waves against a rock-bound coast, and she saw the waters rushing over the veil, as if those torrents that had already tried to destroy her were returning to their mighty bed, hoping to submerge her on their way.

The souls that lay sleeping in the valley and on the snowy mountain tops appeared not to heed it; although the billows surging over the celestial veil caused the earth to rock, still it waked them not.

The floods had hardly swept over the gauzy firmament than avalanches of trees, and stones, and earth, came dashing down upon it as though the mountains had been uprooted and hurled upon it. Still the veil drooped not, while around the margins of the rocks panthers were shrieking and wolves howling, and every conceivable kind of ferocious beast was trying to rend it with their claws and teeth, but not one thread of it could they break. The State beheld it with an unflinching trust and steadfast

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gaze, until she saw hydra-headed serpents darting forward, trying to pierce the veil, and then a tremor shook her frame, yet she did not doubt, but pressed her lips more closely to the rock, and whispered, "Mary Mother, protect thy State!" Instantly the veil was shaken; the mountains were hurled back, and fell with a deafening crash upon those who had tried to throw them on her; the howlings of the beasts were hushed, the serpents' heads were crushed, and the veil itself disappeared, as if it had been quietly folded up and put away by an unseen hand.

The valley was then lighted up by a morning star, that shone like a halo on the brows of the snow-capped peaks, and as it fell on the majestic figure of the State it gave her a supernatural mien. She no sooner beheld its sparkling rays than her lips ejaculated the angel's words, "Hail Mary!" They rang through the air and thrilled the hearts of the sleepers, like the joyful reveille falling upon the ears of victorious soldiers. They instantly arose, made the sign of the cross, and buckled on their armour, like ready warriors, and turning towards the star, they too burst forth "Hail Mary!"

These words pealed through the valley and were re-echoed by the adjacent hills, as though nature were offering up a hymn of praise to the Virgin Mary. Her Majesty then observed that the hills and the valleys in the interior world were covered with a dew that spread itself over them like a gossamer veil studded with opals and orient pearls, and as the light fell upon it it dissolved and inflamed like the sweetest of incense rising from the bosom of the earth, beneath which could be heard a soft harmonious strain, the breathing of GRATITUDE, for the

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dew was its breath. The State required no interpreter to tell her what that dew meant, for it exudes from virtue and truth as naturally as the rose and the lily exhale their scent; and it is to the Creator the sweetest of incense, and the soul's most precious perfume. As it gushes out of love it is the soul's music too, that should always accompany prayer; for prayer without it grates upon our Saviour's ears, and is distasteful to Him: but prayer accompanied with gratitude is so divinely sweet that it captivates and ravishes the Heart of God Himself.

The State quite forgot herself watching the dew, and listening to the joyful melody that those words, "Hail Mary," were still echoing through the valley. As the dew dissolved it arose in flames that were carried swiftly upward, where they united in a body, and formed a softly-tinted crystal canopy, suspended over the valley in the shape of a scallop shell, the emblem of CANDOUR and SINCERITY, the sounding board for GRATITUDE'S symphony. Averting her gaze from it, she began watching the movements of those in the valley, who appeared to be adorning themselves for a wedding; she looked steadily upon them until she was startled by a soft still voice that hailed her, saying, "My Lady of Victories, make haste to the wedding."

Looking around her, she hoped to behold Him whom she had heard address her by so beautiful a title. Yet she saw Him not, but could see the inhabitants of the interior world descending the hills, as if they too were searching for their God, who had hidden from them. The star now wended its way towards the east, and seemed to have changed its course in order to meet the sun that was rising; and the State, now taking the lead, was

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followed by the rest, who were keeping their eyes fixed on the star, as though it were the only guide to the God they were seeking. They had not gone far before they came to a vast open plain carpeted with violets and lilies of the valley. In the centre lay a triangular stone, on which was a tabernacle, whose pinnacle was lost to the sight on account of a cloud of incense that overshadowed it. They no sooner entered the plain than the star appeared to stay, as if waiting for them to come up with it, but before they could reach it it set in the folds of the curtain that hung before the tabernacle, where it nestled for a moment, and then disappeared from their gaze. The State became anxious, fearing that the light of the star was spent, and they might lose their way, when, casting her eyes about her, she saw her companions had already preceded her, and were hovering around the tabernacle, like famished doves waiting to be fed.

The State hastened to join them, and sinking on her knees, she took a place beside them at that table where no distinction of rank is made. Still He whom she sought did not come, and she wondered why her Lord tarried, when, raising her eyes, she beheld St. Peter in regal robes, and her heart lighted up, for she hoped he had come to withdraw the curtain, and open the door of the tabernacle, because she knew that He whom her soul was then burning to see was hidden within it. The most profound silence now everywhere reigned; not a breath could be heard amidst their anxious longings, when suddenly she beheld the hidden God appear to offer Himself up as a living sacrifice for her iniquities. It moved her heart so that she was about to burst into tears, as she asked God's pardon in the name of the Victim; but her tears flowed

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not, because her soul was relieved, for she felt the sacrifice was accepted, and that her heart was clean. Calvary now could no longer be seen, and the State's heart panted with delight as she saw St. Peter withdraw the curtain and take up the key to open the door of the tabernacle, which he had no sooner done than he bowed his knee before the Lord of Hosts, who now came forth like the morning sun arrayed in glory.

He was robed in that mystical veil which had been spread in the firmament over the valley, and on His head reposed that morning star that was dissolving like a dew-drop, diffusing the sweetest fragrance over His whole body, while the light that shone from His Sacred Person pierced the veil like liquid rays, penetrating the souls of those who were gathered around the table, as though their hearts had been transformed into celestial tabernacles, and were ready to receive Him.

The State tried to taste those liquid rays that now fell upon her as though she were kneeling beneath a crystal fountain, but she had first to throw herself down and press her lips close to the triangular stone before she could taste them, when one drop sufficed to inebriate her so that she wished the rock might open to receive her, for in its polished surface she could see that face again she had seen reflected in the water, and in her rapture she believed if the rock could but open she could seize it, and then it could never again hide itself from her. How long she remained there she never knew, but raising her head as if trying again to seize those liquid rays before they fell on the triangular stone, she saw the tabernacle was closed, that St. Peter and those who had accompanied her had gone, and the angels were stationed on the mountain's

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peaks, holding the corners of that mystical veil that was then extended over the plain, while the Son of Man was shining through it, as though He were watching over her alone, and the affections of her heart were dearer to Him than the natural government of worlds.

As this consoling truth was penetrating her soul, shouts of victory rent the air, and turning to see whence they came, she saw a beauteous Queen borne rapidly along on a triumphal car, drawn by a royal band of heroes, and followed by the inhabitants of the interior world, who were carrying garlands, and making the welkin ring with shouts of victory. The State wondered who this favourite Queen could be, and as the car approached her, so that she could view it closely, a secret envy took possession of her soul, for she felt the ascendancy of a rival power, and realized that there was a sovereign in the interior world to whom she must bow in silent awe, and that she held an empire there over which she, the State, could never have control, for as she was borne rapidly along she looked as though every being *must* do her homage. Passing by her Majesty the State, she never paused or even glanced towards her, but stood immoveable, as if indifferent to love or hate, praise or blame, loyalty or treason; for the stability of her kingdom does not rest on the caprices of fortune, but upon a power she possesses within her soul. The glittering jewels that sparkled in her crown were emblems of the different triumphs and victories she had won, and around her shone a majesty and dignity that surpassed in beauty anything the State had ever yet beheld. She carried no sceptre; her hands were clasped together, and from them listlessly hung a scapular and a rosary, as a victorious

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warrior might carry his weapons and armour after the struggle was over.

The State, forgetting her dignity, followed the car with hasty steps until it came to a sudden halt before a door which as it opened was concealed by incense, as the Queen was lifted from her triumphal car by angels, who bore her through it. As the door closed the incense dispersed, and the State beholding it, again rushed impetuously towards it, and rapping loudly, begged them to open it for her as she wished to enter. Directly above her head another door opened, and St. Peter bending over, offered her Majesty his hand.

"St. Peter," she exclaimed, "who is that beauteous Queen that outrivals me so in the hearts of the inhabitants of the interior world? I envy her such a triumph."

"Madam," replied St. Peter, "that was one of the Little Sisters of the Poor, and the triumph you refer to is, Death swallowed up in Victory."

CHAPTER XX.

Her Majesty now understood that fearlessness of death exhibited by those who dwelt in the interior of the Bark. She felt that her short stay therein had imbued her own soul, too, with an invincible courage, a strength that would never again recoil before any danger to the facing of which she might be summoned by duty. She was standing at the prow of the Bark, and as she looked over towards the "Branch" she saw heads peeping out from under the mottoes and flags.

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"I should like," said a philosopher, addressing St. Peter, "to see the 'Branch' stripped as your Bark has been stripped, for we should all of us like to compare them with each other."

All that could be seen of the "Branch" itself was a cock standing on the top of what appeared to be the main mast. It was impossible to discern anything else, its true outline being entirely muffled up and hidden by rubbishy inscriptions and tawdry ornaments of every kind.

"Ask their crew," replied St. Peter, "to show you its shape."

"Halloa, over there," screamed out a converted corsair, "take down your banners, mottoes, and flags, and show us what is under them."

"That we will not do," shouted back an oarsman, "for they help to keep us warm, and give our ship a *gallus* air."

"Ah," rejoined one of St. Peter's men, "why don't you come over and get out of the cold?"

"Humph," retorted a man from the "Branch," "why don't you come round and get out of the wet?"

"Because," several voices shouted in answer, "we are waterproof over here."

After keeping up a fire of words, which always ended in the same strain, "Why don't you come over? why don't you come round?" St. Peter and his crew came to the conclusion it was useless to bandy words with them any longer, for they had been at it for centuries without any success, and if they wished to see the "Branch" stripped, this could only be achieved by the use of a little force, as had been done to cleanse the Bark. While they were deliberating where to begin, St. Peter

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recollected that the goose had told him she had come over to knock the "Branch" down. So with anxious look he turned to one of the passengers, and inquired what had become of the goose.

"Why, there she is right before us, sitting on the edge of the prow," said several voices at once, as they pointed towards her.

"A most perilous position," remarked St. Peter; "but Americans are so fearless, they always appear to be courting danger. I wonder if her scissors and broom are worn out?"

"Not in the least," an ex-corsair replied, "for she told us this morning that cleaning your Bark had put a point to her quill, sharpened her scissors, and toughened her broom, and that she was bored to death for want of something to do."

"I will set her to work at once," said St. Peter. And he called the goose to him. "My child," he said to her, "I give you leave to cut and sweep the 'Branch' as much as you choose."

"Thank you, holy Father," said the goose; "and may I cut and sweep the passengers too?"

"As much as you like," answered St. Peter.

The goose waited to hear no more, but gathered up her tools and flew over to the "Branch," where she found the passengers and crew so hotly engaged in a discussion, in which they were deeply interested, that none of them noticed her presence. After listening for a moment to hear what it was all about, she discovered that the wrangle had reference to a couple of Latin words, *galea*, a helmet, and *gallus*, a cock. She instantly thrust her head

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out, and said to those on the Bark, who had gathered round the prow:

"They are trying to prove here that the 'Branch' is a galley, and they are disputing over the origin of the word. Some say that galley is derived from the Latin word, *galea*, a helmet, and others declare it is a derivative of *gallus*, a cock, and the latter are in the majority."

"I should think," observed St. Peter, "it would be easy enough for them to prove that their ship is a galley, for what is a galley but a place of toil and misery?"

"Here is Webster's Dictionary," added one of the crew, as he threw it over to her; "that will settle the question."

The goose caught the book and carried it on her back, and took a seat in the midst of the disputants. The moment they espied her they peremptorily demanded who she was, and where she came from with her pack.

"I am a bird of good omen," she answered, without being in the least abashed, "and I hail from America, to decide this momentous question for you."

"What have you there on your back?" they asked; "is it a Bible?"

"Yes," replied the goose, "it is an American one, for we go by it there, follow all its rules, and swear by it too."

At those words they grew more civil, and hoping that the American Bible would be able to throw some light on the word, they assured her that she was very welcome in their midst.

The goose then arose and made a profound bow, as she opened the Dictionary, and began reading aloud:

"Galley,—*galea*. The Latin word signifies a helmet on the top of a mast, and a galley, and the name of the vessel seems to have been derived from the head-piece.

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It is a low flat vessel with one deck, and navigated with sails and oars, being usually a long narrow craft, and carrying two masts with lateen or triangular sails. The largest sort of galleys employed by the Venetians were one hundred and sixty feet in length, with fifty-two oars, each oar being managed by six or seven slaves."

"What has our galley to do with the galley of the Venetians?" interrupted some of the oarsmen, piqued by the urging of that word "slaves."

"Just wait a moment until I have done," returned the goose. And she was about to continue when she was prevented by an Oxonian, who remarked:

"As a galley has two hells, it is another proof that the origin of the word is *gallus*, and not *galea*."

"Very true," said the goose; "but pray let me finish. A galley is also a boat used on the river Thames by custom house officers, press gangs, and for pleasure."

"Quite right," they exclaimed; "and it was for pleasure this galley we are on was made."

"It is also a galley foist," continued the goose, "a barge of state."

"Right again," they screamed at the top of their voices, as the goose closed the book and sat down upon it, as she added:

"This bible shows that your ship is a galley, and from the two hells in it it is clear that its name is derived from its head-piece, *gallus*."

The disputants then dispersed, giving three cheers for the goose and the American bible.

St. Peter's crew getting impatient, cried out to her: "Don't waste so much time over the origin of the name

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of the galley; what we want to see is its shape. What kind of a deck has it? Tell us that first."

The goose instantly went on her knees and felt it, and then poked out her head, and exclaimed, "Oh, what a fine deck they have! it is so nice and soft, it is feathered!"

"Feathered!" murmured St. Peter's crew, shaking their heads doubtingly. "If it is feathered, how is it possible to clean it so as to see your face in it?"

"They don't wish to see how they look over here," replied the goose, "so they wash the deck with alum water to prevent the feathers from dropping off."

Then, turning to the crew of the galley, she said, "I wish to prove to St. Peter and his children that your galley is *a model of its head-piece*, from which it derives its name."

They told her to go ahead, for they wished to have the Papalins see how much they had to boast of.

The goose now became as busy as a bee. She clipped away with her scissors faster and better than she had ever done before, while she applied her broom like a magic wand, until every motto, banner, and flag were gone, and the galley was stripped from top to bottom. This done, there was nothing left to see but a cock in harness, with a liberty pole stuck in the centre of his back, of a decidedly shaky character, notwithstanding the efforts of the ablest men in the realm to brace it up and keep it steady. This pole was the main mast, on the top of which stood a cock, holding the same position on the galley as the dove holds on St. Peter's Bark. Beneath it was a dirty rag flapping in the wind, riddled all to pieces, and known as the sail of charity. The sail of hope was fastened round the cock's

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head,—the cock that made the hull of the galley,—and was tacked to the liberty pole, while the sail of faith was tied to his tail, and then tacked to the pole that stood in the middle of his back, and did duty as their centre of unity.

While St. Peter's crew were standing agape, looking in amazement at this wonderful Church ship of state, a philosopher, raising his voice, asked the goose:

"What have they to hold on to in a storm? It looks as though they had to hold up the main mast themselves to prevent it toppling over. Show us their anchor."

"They don't need an anchor here," screamed the goose in reply, "for when they are likely to fall off they hold on to the feathers."

These words, implying that their rivals were provided with endless resources in a storm, elicited loud applause from the Bark. But the philosophers did not share their enthusiasm, and they cried aloud to the goose:

"You are mistaken this time, for they must have an anchor to lean on."

"No they have not," retorted the goose, "and what is more, they don't need one, for when they are weak and weary they lean on each other."

"Look about you sharp," returned the philosophers, "and you will surely find that they have an anchor, for they need one to sit on."

"Indeed they do not," insisted the goose, "for they sit on those they feel beneath them."

The philosophers now retreated to give place to St. Peter, who asked the goose:

"Can you see a cross there, my child?"

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"Plenty of them, holy Father, for every feather here makes a cross, and so does every oar for the rower."

"But are the seamen and passengers attached to these crosses?" inquired St. Peter.

"No, holy Father, I do not see one of them attached to the crosses, but I see a great many attached to each other."

"But where are their life preservers? they must surely have some, or they never could have existed so long," said St. Peter.

"They float on cock's eggs, holy Father, out of which, when they are warmed, basilisks are hatched to bear them along. They are the boys—I mean the buoys of the galley."

"You are muddling up your talk over there," cried out an ex-corsair; "nobody can understand you."

"Hush," interposed St. Peter, "it is all very clear, I understand the goose perfectly. But tell me, my child, how the galley is raised, for it appears to be on a level with mine, and it cannot be raised by a feather or an egg, and I see no lever attached to it."

The goose not being versed in mechanics, did not understand St. Peter.

"Do you not perceive," put in a philosopher, "that St. Peter's Bark is raised by the cross, which makes a lever, and is placed directly under the mast; and there must be something of the sort about the galley, for you can see that it appears to float on a level with us, and there must be some means of raising it up. Try and find out how it is done."

"I know now what you mean," replied the goose, as down she flew; "but this galley is not raised by a lever

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at all; it is raised by a screw,* and there is a devil under her, holding it up, and turning it too."

"Show us the helm now, my child," said St. Peter.

"Helm, holy Father!" screeched the goose; "why, there are as many helms here as there are oars to the galley, and there are a dozen men pulling on each of them, trying to get possession of them, for they all want to row as they choose."

"That accounts for their preservation," observed St. Peter, "for if they had all rowed ahead they would have soon come to an end. Show us, my child, the chair of state; we should like to see where it is placed."

"Here it is, holy Father," said the goose, pointing to the chair of state where her Majesty used to sit as head of her Church. "You can easily see it, for it is raised in the middle of the galley, and leans for support against the pole of liberty. On the back of the chair is embossed, and also on the top, two little monkeys and three cocks, emblems of the State's spiritual supremacy. The chair is raised very high, so that her Majesty may not hear the noise that is made by the oarsmen, who are always wrangling; for each of them, by trying to row his own way, causes the oars to be continually clacking."

St. Peter made a sign to the goose to try the fidelity of those who were supporting the pole of liberty. The State knew what St. Peter meant, and turned pale: she was sure that they would all become martyrs for the recognized religion of their country, for had they not been supporting it for centuries?

"It would grieve me sorely," her Majesty exclaimed, "to see them sent to an untimely grave on account of

* Intemperance.

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their convictions. I implore you, St. Peter, to call the goose away."

"Madam," returned St. Peter, "if I thought they were serious, and would be willing to lay down their lives for their opinions, I would yield to your Majesty's wishes. But I should like to satisfy you, as well as my crew, of what material these men are made. You have nothing to fear for them, because the State Church was not raised and supported by the blood of its martyrs, but by the pride and lust of its monarchs and their followers."

The goose meanwhile was soaring over the heads of the influential men, knocking every now and then up against the pole of liberty. As she had rendered these men a service, they tried to excuse her awkwardness, although they found it excessively inconvenient, for every time she came bang against the pole she nearly knocked it over, but as she was an American it accounted to them for anything odd or eccentric she had a mind to do. At length she came flying towards them with her scissors wide open, as though she were going to cut off their fingers. At the sight of the scissors the influential men let go of the pole, but caught it again just in time to prevent its going over, and forgetting their indebtedness to her, they ordered her in a peremptory tone to take herself off.

The goose, instead of leaving the galley, began sweeping off their hats.

"By George!" they shouted out, when they realized what she was about, "we can't afford to lose them."

They were about letting go the pole to run after their hats, when their parasites picked them up and put them on their heads again, while the influential men got out their revolvers and threatened the goose to blow out her brains

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unless she left the galley instantly. With their right hands they held their pistols cocked, while with their left they supported the pole of liberty, and were all looking up, determined to fire at the goose if they caught sight of her again. But the goose now chose to fly low, and accosting an oarsman, she asked him to give her some oil.

"The only oil we have on board," he replied, "is the oil used to anoint us."

That will do," said the goose, "only give me enough of it."

As this oarsman was rowing in opposition to the men that the goose was attacking, to encourage her to go ahead he gave her a vial full, which she emptied on her broom, and instantly discovered by the smell that it was petroleum.

"It is just what I require," she said to him; "and I now understand how it is you all take fire here so soon. Now just give me a match."

"No," replied the oarsman; "use your own."

"I have only one," said the goose, as she drew a deep sigh, "and I left it lighted at home."

The oarsman took pity on her then, and struck a match, which he threw upon her broom, that was instantly on fire. The goose to put it out tried to smother it with the influential men's coat tails. These men were still standing with their pistols cocked and their eyes turned up, hoping every moment she would pass, and that they might make a good shot. But as their attention was soon drawn in a different direction, their pistols went prematurely off of their own accord. Then there was confusion on the galley, such as had never been known before, because the influential men, seeing the light

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coming from behind them, and imagining that it brought heat with it too, and wishing to get clear of both, they let go of the pole and jumped overboard, which caused a general slaughter, for the pole instantly toppled over and fell upon those who were rowing in its shadow, for the influential men no sooner let go than down went the liberty pole, cock and all, into the water, and the chair of state where her Majesty used to sit as head of her Church came tumbling after.

The oarsmen who survived the catastrophe were so frightened that they got astride their oars and jumped into the water, under the impression that they were safer in the sea astride of an oar than they had been on the galley, seeing that the liberty, to which they had always clung, was so easily thrown overboard. There was great excitement, too, on St. Peter's Bark, but of a different sort. Her Majesty the State was praising God for having rescued her; she then clearly saw that the State Church was upheld by human means alone, and the instant the influential men went overboard everything else went with them.

The lifeboats had already been got out to rescue the "martyrs," for such is the name they gave themselves when they cried out to St. Peter to have pity on them, and send his crew to help them. When they were taken out of the water it was discovered that their bodies were not even scorched, but every one of their coat tails had been burned clean off, which seemed to please the Broad Church party, because they wished to resemble their emblem, the short-tailed cock.

Their attention was drawn from the "martyrs" by the goose, who called out to the crew, "You can now see how

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the State Church is divided. The cock's head represents the High Church, the Low Church is his tail, and the Broad Church lies across his back, for when he spreads his wings it is the widest part of the 'Branch.'"

"Tell us," interposed a philosopher, "how the whole thing is lighted."

"Everybody here," cried the goose in answer, "carries a lantern of his own, and trims it to suit himself, and no matter how much some of their wicks smoke, every one thinks that his own lantern gives the best light, and tries to prove it to the rest."

She had no sooner uttered those words than she gave a scream, as if she were frightened out of her senses. They all supposed the devil had got hold of her at last, for they never before heard such an unearthly yell.

"Holy Father," she exclaimed, as soon as she recovered her breath, "I stepped on an eagle that is nearly crushed to death: I thought it was a cat. Why, their liberty pole has been all the while resting on its back."

The goose picked up the eagle and tried to bring it to life, for it was not dead yet. When St. Peter's crew beheld it, they clapped their hands for joy, for the eagle no sooner spread its wings than they recognized it, and knew what it meant.

"There," said St. Peter, addressing her Majesty, "you can now see what you have been doing when you tried to exterminate the religious orders and uproot Catholic education. You have been crushing loyalty, and setting up licence; for you threw down the eagle, and put the cock up in its place."

The "martyrs" then called out to those who were sailing on their oars to come and help them put the liberty

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pole back, but St. Peter's guard boats prevented them from even touching it, for whenever they came near it, and tried to get hold of it, the crew would strike it with their broad-axes, as if they would chop it to pieces, while the "martyrs," with a sneer, said to them, "That is the way you Romans treat liberty, you hack it to bits."

The crew kept striking away at it, as they answered them, "We hold liberty as sacred as our lives, but licence we cut into chips, for it was with nothing but licence that you have been trying to crush the religious orders."

The State was deeply moved, for she now saw her great mistake in tearing down the eagle, and setting up the cock in its place; she saw, too, that with her own hands she had been crushing out loyalty, and aiding and abetting rebellion and treason.

The goose all this while had been making an inspection, and she happened to poke her head under one of the galley cock's wings. As soon as she withdrew it it was easy enough to see she had been shedding tears.

"Holy Father," she said, wiping her eyes, "their religious orders are under here."

"What!" exclaimed St. Peter, "under the cock's wings! That accounts for so many of them dropping off and coming over to us, because they had nothing under them to stand upon. But what keeps any of them up?"

"Something dreadful, holy Father," sobbed the goose, "for they were fastened to this left wing by corroding chains, which they call obedience, that are chafing them to death. O, what a sight! There are souls here buried alive, and nearly starved to death, and they can scarcely see either, their eyes have been so long unaccustomed to the light."

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"Tell them," said St. Peter, "to come over."

"They say, holy Father, that they are so feeble they can neither walk nor stand alone, and they beg you to have pity on them and come to them."

"Certainly," answered St. Peter; "tell them that I will do anything in my power to save them."

St. Peter then left the prow and went to the helm, and began steering towards them, and told all his children to take hold of the silent oars and move them, which was no sooner done than instantly there arose a triumphal screaming and hurrahing from the influentials who had jumped overboard, and the others who were sailing on their oars. They waved their hats and handkerchiefs in the air, as if they had just won a victory. St. Peter and his crew, seeing the peril they were in, thought they must be crazy, and asked them what they meant by rejoicing when they were just on the point of sinking.

"Did we not tell you," they shouted, as the water came gurgling in their throats, "that we would never go over to St. Peter, but that he would have to come round to us?"

St. Peter, hearing those words, cried out to them, "You will soon find that my going round does not mean that I am going to attach any part of your galley to my Bark; but I have always been willing to make any sacrifice to save your souls, and that is just what I am doing now."

"Then throw us a net," screamed those who were sailing on their oars, "for we want to get in out of the wet;" while the "martyrs" cried out to him, "Give us a sling, for we are freezing to death."

St. Peter paid no attention to them, but kept right ahead. He was determined, if he could, to save the starving ones first, for he knew that the "martyrs," and

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those who were floating on their oars, would look out for themselves as they had always done from the beginning.

As his Bark moved towards the galley he could see that it was standing over hell, and that the goose had told the truth, for it was held up by a devil, who was raising it with a screw. He was not afraid to approach it on that account, for he had Christ's words to assure him that the gates of hell should not prevail against his Bark. The guard boats got between him and the mouth of hell, where they were preparing to cleanse the people's wounds. It was only those who would consent to be healed that St. Peter would permit to come on board. But the devils began raising such a smoke that it frightened the poor souls under the left wing so that they were afraid to move. St. Peter's men then boarded the galley, and began breaking their chains, while others stood beneath them, and caught them gently in their arms, and after dressing their wounds and cleansing their sores, carried them tenderly on to the Bark, where they were cared for like lambs who were dying with hunger and perishing with cold, while the only words they uttered were, "We are so glad to get home."

While the passengers and crew were attending to these poor souls, St. Peter observed the goose looking around in search of something. "I hope," he said to her, "that you have lost none of your tools!"

"Oh no, Holy Father," returned the goose, "but I am looking to see if I can find the lanterns belonging to those who you have just taken on board."

"The oarsmen that they were attached to," said St. Peter, "probably blew them out, and let them see by theirs."

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A lively scene now began between St. Peter and those who were under the right wing, and who wanted him to come round to them. But St. Peter no sooner heard their voices, and caught a glimpse of their horns, than he said to them, "I am willing to come round for the lambs, but the old bucks are strong enough to come over themselves."

You could hear their horns rattle as they shook their heads and bleated out: "We are too feeble, St. Peter; —hic,—have pity, and come round."

The guard boats got under them and told them to jump down! "Never!" they cried out, "until St. Peter comes round!"

St. Peter told the goose to beat the left wing with her broom, and see if she could not shake them down. She gave it several blows, but still they held on. She tried her scissors, but they had no effect either, for they met with a substance too hard to cut through. Getting impatient at their resistance, she thrust her head under the wing to see what they were fastened to.

"Are they nailed on?" asked St. Peter.

"No, holy Father," answered the goose, "not one of them is nailed on, but everyone of them is screwed."

"In that case," said St. Peter, "I had better come round and turn them, or they may get tighter and tighter."

St. Peter then steered his Bark round to them, to see if he could turn the screws, but he found them all so tight that he could not move one of them. When he saw on what these souls had been living, he did not wonder that they were not able to stand up without something strong to keep them up, and he asked them in a paternal tone

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how they could be so foolish as to take so much of tha stuff. They all began hiccoughing, and trying to answer at once.

"Hic,—you know, St. Peter,—hic,—you know, that we were afraid we should hear the cock crow."

"You need not fear the cock any longer," said St. Peter, "for the cock has 'gone over.'"

"Gone over,—hic,—the cock has gone over, did you say? Why then we will go over too, for we will follow him whithersoever he goeth."

"Alas!" sighed St. Peter, "here is the result of the dread of an awakened conscience. But our Lord has set me the example, and has told me what to do. I see that I must come round, and carry you over on my shoulders." But in order to bring them over he had first to get out the screws; after examining them closely he discovered they were frozen in tight, and had to be thawed out. The instant he touched them the ice melted, and he was able to turn them, and by the aid of a stomach pump he relieved them of the noxious draughts they had been imbibing by pailfuls. As he took them up one by one on his shoulders, and was carrying them over, the crew followed closely after him, and picked the burrs and briars out of their wool, while others trimmed their horns, so by the time they were on board the Bark, they were as fine looking sheep as St. Peter could have wished to have.

They were scarcely on board when they began frolicking like lambs who were glad to sport again in the bright sunshine, for in their position on the galley they had never been able to see anything but stars, and sundry full moons, that appeared to be making faces at them all the time.

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Father Eel, who had followed them when St. Peter carried them over, picked up a piece of paper that had fallen out of their wool. It was one of their spiritual exercises, and he read it for the edification of the crew.

"Rule 240.—Go to bed late, and take distilled drinks as long and as strong as you can bear them. The chances are then, nine out of ten, that in the morning the crowing of the cock will never disturb you."

The goose meanwhile had let herself down by holding on to the galley cock's tail, and was brandishing her broom while swinging over hell, trying to provoke the devil to let go the screw, so as to let the whole concern down. But this devil understood his business too well, and was not so easily moved. St. Peter, seeing the goose swinging to and fro in that perilous position, supposed that she was doing it for sport, and was trying to prove to his crew that the feathers after all were not such a bad thing to hold on to in a storm. After watching her for a moment, he saw that she was teazing the devil, who was trying to play the martyr, and he said to her, rather sternly:

"You had better finish your description of the galley before you stop to play."

"Play!" exclaimed the goose, "why, holy Father, I am hard at work."

St. Peter then understood what she was about. But he told her she might as well desist, for she could not put that devil out, as he was too well trained, for he had been brought up by Henry VIII., and had been playing ever since at that game.

"Very well," said the goose, as she tried to swing up on deck again, "I have finished."

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"No, you have not," retorted St. Peter, "for you have said nothing yet about the interior of the galley."

"Holy Father," exclaimed the goose, "you know as well as I do that the interior of the galley is occupied by the secret societies, and if I went in, and they caught me telling you what I saw there, when I came out they would murder me!"

"Very true, my child," answered St. Peter, "but I think you can describe it to her Majesty, and my crew, without going through it."

The goose, to please St. Peter, let go of her swing, and flew to the galley cock's neck, when with her quill she pointed to his bill. "This," said she, "is the entrance to the lodge; for the first thing they present you is a bill, and it is there they take you in. After you have crossed that, they take you down the cock's neck. You see that the descent is perpendicular from the moment you put your foot in. When you reach his crop you are muffled up, and taught various antics, which are known as the devil's gymnastics. In the middle of these exercises comes the serious part, where they make you swear upon your coffin lid, while you are lying in your coffin bare, that you will let them murder you if you should ever tell what you may chance to see while going through the thirty-three degrees, before you reach the light again. It is clear enough to see whence the light proceeds, because the cock is standing over hell, and that is the point of view to which they wish to bring all the sons of men. But it is only the rich they can lead there; for this precious light can only be obtained by paying a high price."

A voice, which proceeded from the interior of the galley,

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was heard to say: "We need money to take care of the widows and orphans."

"Ah!" retorted the goose, "those you take care of are few indeed, compared to the number of widows and orphans you make."

This was more than the devils could stand. They were afraid that if the goose kept on she would break up the society, which would greatly decrease the population of their realm, and they all made a rush at her, but the goose went out of sight like a shot, and the devils instantly gave her up, thinking that if she were going to heaven at such a quick pace, it was no use for them to try and catch her.

They supposed she had scampered over to St. Peter's Bark, but instead of hiding there, she rushed into the cock's bill, and dashed down the masonic hall, where they were performing a ceremony. She never stopped for that, but went right through it, tipping over trowel, compass, mallet, eye coffin, grand master, apron, and all. In stepping over the grand master, she caught hold of his regalia, and jerked it off, and carried it with her as she went tearing through their thirty-three degrees, until she came to the light, in which she appeared a beautiful sight, for her feathers were rumpled, and in such a plight that she resembled the cock that had been brought into court after he had been hiding amongst the excommunicated souls. The inner course had so thoroughly transformed her that when she stuck the regalia across her breast the devils that passed her raised their paws, and gave her a military salute, for they all mistook her for the grand master mason himself.

They had hardly gone, when the goose flew across hell

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and got into the water, where she swam until she reached a life-boat that belonged to the Oblate Fathers; she knew they would never betray her. They rowed her immediately over to the Bark, where they were deafened by the noise proceeding from the interior of the galley, which seemed to be in the greatest uproar.

It appeared that the goose, when she went through the ceremony, caught her leg in the rope arranged with a noose around a man's neck, who was seated blindfolded on a coffin, taking the oath, and as she dashed ahead without looking back, she dragged the man along through seven or eight degrees, and when they picked him up he was strangled to death. What aggravated the disaster was, he had only paid his entrance fee, and had left three wives and ten children to be supported by this benevolent society.

Everyone was so busily engaged watching the doings of the lodge, that they paid no attention to the goose, who was sitting by herself with a disconsolate look, for on examining her tools, she found that in going through the ceremony her scissors and her broom had been able to stand it, but that her quill had got screwed. Holding it up for them to look at, she cried, "How in the world can I settle my bills, if in future I must write with a drunken quill?" Wherever she laid it down, it would instantly spring up, and stagger about, which caused no little terror on the Bark, every one was afraid it might cut them up, because it acted as if perfectly indifferent which way it went.

Meanwhile the crew of the "Branch" had become so disaffected that many of them deserted, and came over to St. Peter, but a few were still trying to break through the

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united forces of the guard boats, in order to reconstruct the galley. St. Peter called the goose to him, and said "You told me you had come over here to knock the 'Branch' down."

"So I have, holy Father," replied the goose, "but, like reforming the age, it will require time."

"Do not be too nice about it, child; use your broom."

"It is not strong enough, holy Father; there is too much masonry about it, that alone holds it together now; for you can see by the condition of my feathers that the whole interior is rotten. But I have a weapon here of polished steel;" saying which, she drew from under her wing an *arrow** bright and clean. "With this I can change the shape of it, so that there will be nothing left of it but the carcass."

"That arrow is a formidable weapon," observed St. Peter, "and if my Bark had not been divine Voltaire with it would have split it to atoms."

The goose then whispered to St. Peter, "I want a bow." She did not speak low enough, for those who had just come over, and were hanging around the helm, overheard her, and were disedified that she should tell St. Peter that she wanted a beau, and were greatly scandalized, too, when they heard St. Peter tell her to go and pray for one. While she was praying they began to stone her, believing she was praying for a sweetheart.

She had not prayed long, however, when their attention was drawn to a mist arising from the sea about a furlong off, in which suddenly appeared a beautiful bow, formed by the rays of the setting sun. The goose was so elated when she beheld it, that she hastened to get behind it, and those

* Ridicule.

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who a moment ago where scandalized on her account, now understood her, and began clapping their hands to applaud her, but she no sooner reached the spot where the rainbow was formed, than two little devils came racing after her. At the sight of the devils making for her, the applause ceased, and before the goose knew that the devils were after her, public opinion was again pelting her.

When the devils got up to her one of them addressed her, "We have come after that regalia, ma'am; it belongs to our papa."

"You shall have it," replied the goose, as she took them behind the bow, and cut the regalia, and handed each of them an end of it. "Now see," she added, "who can pull the hardest. The one that is the strongest shall carry it home."

She then put her arrow in the centre of it, and began drawing it back. The little devils, thinking she was trying to get it from them, began pulling on to it with all their might, until it made a splendid string for the bow stretched in the mist.

The goose then let go, which knocked both the devils down, while the arrow sped with such force that it went through the "Branch," and lodged in the bottom of the Methodists' canoe, while the galley cock's head, tail, wings, and feathers could be seen flying in the air in every direction; nothing was left of it but its legs and its carcass.

The masons instantly rushed out and tried to putty up the holes, so that their little game might not be seen through and exposed. They then covered it with a magnificent pall, embroidered with silver and studded with stars, and adorned with a golden border.

But there was a most affecting scene behind the rain-

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bow, where the two little devils were crying and sobbing, because they did not know how to find their way home, as their land-mark was gone. The goose, under a pretence of wiping away their tears, took advantage of their despair, and got back the ribbon, and swam away with it, leaving them alone.

When she reached the spot where the shattered galley stood, her foot caught in the border of the pall, which concealed all that now remained of the "Branch," and she was carrying it off, when a devil rushed after her, and disentangled it from her foot, and cursed her for her awkwardness as he dragged up the cloth.

CHAPTER XXI.

When the goose arrived at the Methodists' canoe she pulled out her arrow that stuck in its hull, and after perching herself on the prow, she inquired of the passengers if they had heard the news.

"Yes," they replied, "we hear that the Papists are coming round."

"Pshaw," said the goose, "that is stale news. The latest is, that somebody drove a hole in the bottom of this canoe, and that it is now going down. But, by Wesley! how your lanterns* smoke; any one would think you were setting fire to your boat."

They made an inspection, and sure enough they found it was half filled with water, which was still coming in; but they heeded not the smoke, it was what they had

* Lantern, emblem of reason.

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always lived in. Getting slightly alarmed, they began exhorting each other what to do, when one of them asked the goose, "Whose beautiful ship is that lying over there, that appears to us here like a fairy castle launched in the air? I wonder if they would take us on board?"

"On certain conditions I have no doubt they would," replied the goose, "for that is St. Peter's Bark."

"St. Peter's Bark!" they cried; "why, we thought it had gone under, and the Pope too, and the passengers and crew had gone over to the 'Branch,' to try and save themselves."

"Ah," said the goose, "that is the way they represent things to you, so as to keep you blindfolded. But as your canoe is sinking, the best thing you can do is to go over, and make peace with St. Peter, and try and save yourselves on his Bark, for it is the only ship in these waters that you can't make a hole in."

"It certainly looks stronger than the boat we are in," remarked a sister to a deacon, who was singing a Wesleyan hymn.

"Let us praise God for His goodness to us, my beloved sister, and don't be taken in by that goose. One of our brethren brought her up, but he could never make her speak the truth, and she has come over here to try to fool us, knowing we would rather go to hell than be saved as Papists; for what would Wesley say if he caught us in heaven with the mark of the beast upon us? She is trying to make us row away from that beautiful ship, hoping she may be able to sink us yet, for she owes us a spite because one of our brethren tried to *beat* the truth into her."

"She deserves to be plucked alive," rejoined an elder,

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"for coming here with such a lie, and trying to make us believe that that beautiful ship belongs to the Papalins, when we know that the foul-mouthed creature of Babylon has been drowned. Did we not fish up her petticoat, her stays, and scarlet gown? And did we not see her bustle floating like a balloon in the air, and are not some of our boys now fishing with strands of her hair? And those buffoons who had been defending her, did we not see them dropping bit by bit into hell? No, no; she has gone down, down; and what we there behold is a figure of the new Jerusalem. Why, the sight of it alone speaks peace to our souls."

The goose did not wait to hear more, for she thought she saw a brother coming towards her with a club, while the captains changed their course, and began rowing towards the Bark. When they caught a glimpse of St. Peter they wondered who he was. Some thought it must be Wesley who had risen again; others said it was Watts, for he appeared to them like a man after their own heart.

They hailed one of the guard boats, and asked them who that man was with hoary locks standing at the helm of that magnificent ship.

"That is the Pope," answered the commander of the guard boat.

The word Pope stuck in their throats, as they tried to repeat what he said to the others, who did not catch his words. While the brother who carried the club remarked, "That man you spoke to is in with the goose, and is trying to play the deuce with us too. But moor up a little closer and speak to the old man himself."

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"Hey, commander," cried out an elder, "what's the name of your ship?"

"It is named after me," replied the Pontiff, "and is called the Bark of St. Peter. Why, would you like to come over?"

"I see," returned the elder, "that you are fond of a joke, but we are serious, for our boat is sinking, and unless we get out of it the water will be soon gurgling in our throats. We have fallen in love with your ship, sir, and wish you would let us come on board of it."

"I am serious, too," replied St. Peter, "and cannot deny the truth to please you. If you wish me to take you on board, you have got to renounce your prejudices. You must get out of that smoke, or you will have to remain where you are."

"Well," replied a brother, "if this is St. Peter's Bark, why did it never dazzle us so before, for you must know as well as we do that St. Peter's Bark is something we have always shrunk from and abhorred."

"Alas, children!" replied St. Peter, in a paternal tone, "my Bark has been going the way its Founder trod. It has been on Tabor, and carried in triumph through Jerusalem, and afterwards buffeted through its streets, and crucified on Calvary. When Christ appeared in robes derisive of His royalty they did not make Him less a king, nor did He in them prove Himself less our God. And you should not denounce my Bark because my enemies have defamed it, and because some of my children have rigged it up and made it a laughing stock, for underneath those flimsy trappings could always be found the hidden God! It required more faith and self-abasement to seek Him here then, it is true, than it does now, since

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all that tawdry rubbish has been removed. And those who sought Him here then, and found Him, will not lose their reward, because for them is reserved a brighter crown."

The light from the lantern shone down upon them as St. Peter spoke. In spite of his much-hated title, Pope, they knew by that light alone that he spoke the truth. They began accordingly to make efforts to dissipate the dense smoke in which they had hitherto been wrapped. Then one of their elders asked:

"Pray tell us, St. Peter, when your Bark was in its sepulchre, what good angel came and rolled the stone away? For to us it is now evident that, having once been dead and buried, you are now gloriously risen to life again."

"Angel!" replied St. Peter, as a quaint smile passed over his features: "God does not make use of angels in these days to do His work; He chooses the refuse of creation; for my Bark owes its resurrection to a little grey goose,—the mere limb of a bird,—that goes so fast the devils can't keep up with her, let alone catch her, so full is she of that go-a-head spirit pervading America."

"Hail, Columbia!" they cried; "we know her. How she was given to lying!"

"Now, at any rate, she speaks the truth," rejoined St. Peter, taking up the cudgels for her.

"Who managed to teach it her?" they anxiously inquired. "Some of our brethren were seven years trying to knock it into her head, but they all failed signally."

"We found no difficulty in the matter," St. Peter answered, "after once convincing her that OBEDIENCE is a

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virtue which secures the salvation of those it has once attached to the mast."

"What!" they exclaimed, "do you mean to tell us that she not only speaks the truth, but actually obeys into the bargain?"

"We have had no reason to doubt her," answered St. Peter, "though her obedience has not yet been severely tested."

"If you have made her speak the truth once, it is enough for us," they said, "for it is an irrefutable proof that you can perform miracles, and so we give in to you. Pray take us on board, we have nothing more to say."

They observed that St. Peter hesitated, as if there was some insuperable objection, and they were anxiously waiting for him to speak, when the goose accosted them, and said, with a smirk, "Before St. Peter takes you on board your women must be made to promise to stop speaking in church. Albeit it was not St. Peter, but St. Paul, who forbade all such speaking in the house of God."

"Ah," retorted a brother, "but you know therein our women and St. Paul don't agree."

"Nevertheless," the goose replied, "if you want to stand well with St. Peter, you must agree with St. Paul, otherwise St. Peter will not take you on board."

Then they understood the difficulty, and many of them hesitated, until the water rising to their lips, they picked up an old hen, fit emblem of their church, and offered it to St. Peter as a mark of their submission. Many of the women, however, jumped clean overboard, preferring instantaneous death to the obligation of holding their tongues even in church. St. Peter took the hen, and the last that was ever seen of it, it was flying towards hell, where a

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devil took possession of it, in the hope of hatching another cackling congregation.

CHAPTER XXII.

But a difficulty now arose as to what amount of concession should be made to induce the "martyrs," and those who were sailing on their oars, to come on board. They were all dissatisfied, and declared that the test applied respectively to the two ships had not been fair, for St. Peter's Bark had only been stripped; no arrow had been shot at it yet, nor had one of its seamen been touched; no one had attempted to burn them alive or cut them up. "No," they said, "before we join St. Peter, he must prove to us that his Bark is divine, and that his crew are made of better material than ours."

St. Peter, feeling for them the greatest commiseration, treated them like spoiled children, and asked them what more they wanted of him.

"We want you," they replied, "to let that American imp fire her arrow at your Bark, as she shot it at the 'Branch.'"

At the word "Branch" they all now laughed outright in spite of themselves.

"Agreed," said St. Peter, "if that will satisfy you."

"But more than that," they added; "she must try such seamen, too, as we point out, and the same weapons she used upon us she must use upon them."

"I agree to that, too," answered St. Peter. And he told the goose to do as they desired.

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The " martyrs" singled out three men they hated most, who had always opposed them, and whom they longed to see crushed. They were three officers high in command, whom the goose disliked too, for one of them had refused to give his opinion of her, while another had given his too freely of her book, and the third she was jealous of, because he could write.

The gentleman who had refused his opinion was a cardinal, unwilling to believe that order could in these days be brought out of chaos; and if there was one thing he hated to have dealings with, that one thing was a woman led by extraordinary ways. The goose went for him first. As soon as he espied her he said to his friends who were standing beside him, " In regard to that creature, opinions are divided."

" Yes," one of them replied; "but my opinion is that she is a very fine bird."

The cardinal knit his brows and was silent, when the goose flew up to him, and knocked his hat clean off his venerable head. Then as he stooped to pick it up, without being able to find it, " My opinion is," he exclaimed, " your bird is a bat."

" There," cried the goose, " I have his opinion at last." And she began to hop about him as if she were dancing a jig.

The cardinal, to get rid of her, started for the interior of the Bark, but the goose kept close to him until he got to the door, and then she flew back with something in her claw. The crew sent up a shriek, for they thought she was carrying off his scalp. The cardinal rushed after her to the side of the ship, and raising both hands when he

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saw something afloat, he cried out in a loud voice, "She is no better than a wild ass's colt!"

St. Peter, who had been watching her, came up to her, and said, "How dare you touch a hair of that man's head? After all his hard labour he deserves to be left in peace. He is one of the best officers I have ever had."

"Holy Father," replied the goose, "I would not for the world touch a hair of his head. What you see floating is only his wig."

"Go," said St. Peter to her, "and fish it up at once, and give it him back."

The goose started off, and the "martyrs," supposing she was going to cut the cardinal up, cried out to her, "Enough, enough; we are satisfied that that man is made of the right stuff; we admire his opinions." The goose went straight ahead, and brought up the wig dripping wet, and laying it down at the cardinal's feet, she crouched beside it, and asked him to bless her before she put it back.

"My child," said the cardinal, stretching out his hand, "as you have always desired to know my opinion, I will now give it to you. I firmly believe that the devil is in you." Saying which, he threw holy water on her, and made the sign of the cross over her, as he said: "*Exi ab ea, spiritus immunde! Exi ab ea, immunde spiritus!*"

This was too much for the "martyrs," to find this man possessing such sound judgment, and at the same time to be so humble, and forgiving, and kind.

"No wonder," they cried, "that St. Peter's Bark stands when it is supported by such a man."

The goose then arose to put the wig back. The cardinal this time appeared resigned to his fate. But the

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goose, instead of approaching him, flew away as if she were afraid, for his head was no longer bare, an angel had covered it, and an aureola was shining there. The goose came trembling to St. Peter with the wig.

"Holy Father," said she, as she wiped away her tears with it, "what shall I do with it?"

St. Peter, seeing she was contrite, thought it unnecessary to reprove her again. He told her since the cardinal did not require it, and as she was poor, she might keep it and use it for a nightcap.

The goose then set fire to her broom, and went for the cardinal who had expressed his opinion of her book too freely. He was standing near the mast, and looked like a cake of ice, so she whirled her broom about him to see if she could thaw him a little, but it had no effect upon him. She then took her scissors and tried to clip him, but she found it as impossible to cut him as it had been to thaw him, so she threw down her tools and called him a brick.

The "martyrs" were not surprised in the least, because they always knew him to be full of grit.

The prelate, seeing the goose turning disconsolately away, bade her stay.

"I see, my child," said he, "that you appear to know what I need, and I wish you could succeed and give me a little heat, for whenever I preach, and see the people going to sleep, I feel it must be a relief, and that the Lord has taken pity on them. Still I always do my best, but I was never able yet to get up any steam."

The "martyrs" were so edified at the cardinal's perfect knowledge of himself, and his great meekness, too, in acknowledging his defects, that they seemed to forget all the hard knocks he had given them, and wishing to con-

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sole him, one of them said, "But your eminence knows that a man once fell asleep when St. Paul preached."

"Ah," replied the cardinal, "but it was not St. Paul's preaching that put him to sleep; it was the light and heat."

"There's an honest man," whispered the "martyrs;" "we might as well give him up. But what is that light shining about him?" they asked.

"It is a little cannon," answered the goose, "he keeps beside him, loaded with benevolence, and whenever it goes off it makes that halo about him."

"But we now suspect," cried out the men, "that the cardinal has something to do with it."

They concluded to watch him, when sure enough they caught him loading it and firing it off. They all sprang for him, and wanted to know where he got his ammunition from. The cardinal made no reply, but appeared congealed again, as if he would like to freeze them. But they gave him to understand he was not going to blind them this time, for they now saw plainly enough how he took a real pleasure in making people believe that he had a defect, when there was *not a blemish in him.*

"St. Peter," they cried, "you are lucky to have such a man on your Bark. We find it no miracle that you do not sink, when one such man is enough to keep a ship afloat."

"Now go for the other," they shouted out to the goose, "and try and cut him up."

"Ah," said St. Peter, "with him you may do what you like; but I advise you to be wary, for he is accustomed to strike."

The goose leaped on the arm of this cardinal's chair,

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and tried to cut his nose off. The prelate was very busy, and pretended not to notice her, until the "martyrs" cried out, "Are your scissors dull?"

His eminence then said, "My child, I think they are. I will sharpen them for you." Saying which, he pulled out from his pocket a pair of shears,* and rubbed the edges of her scissors across them, and added: "They will cut better now; their points were not fine enough."

The goose, instead of trying them on his nose again, got away from him, for he did not put his shears up, but held them in a position to use them about her neck, and she cried out to the men who were urging her to go ahead, "If you want to cut this man up, you had better come over and do it yourselves."

"Roast him, then," they shouted back.

She lighted her broom again, but before she could touch him, or knew what was coming, the cardinal had it in his hand, and was beating her over the head with the burning end. He then threw it at her, and told her he thought her broom was a good one. The "martyrs," instead of sympathizing with her, began to deride her for allowing such an old man to strike her.

"Ah," sighed the goose, as she tried to hold up her smarting head, "you may call him an old man, but he strikes like a young man."

"What is that light shining round his head?" the "martyrs" asked; "is it an aureola?"

"Indeed," replied the goose, "I'll examine it first, before I pronounce him a saint." And she crept cautiously behind him to see what the light meant. A moment afterwards she cried out to the men, "That shows how

* Symbolic of sarcasm.

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much you know about aureolas over there. Why, the light that you take for a nimbus is the devil holding a lantern at the back of his head."

The goose had hardly uttered those words than they all thought they heard a most extraordinary snort, and they started back as if the leviathan had sprung off the Bark. But it was nothing of the sort; it was only the cardinal, who in jerking back his head had put both the devil and his lantern out, but in extinguishing the lantern he had nearly burnt the devil's nose off, which brought a smile to the corner of St. Peter's mouth, as he remarked, "I knew he could beat the devil as well as the goose. If he had only been an Italian he would have made a good Pope."

The goose now wanted to give him up, but as he was the one that the "martyrs" hated most, they tried to spur her to attack him again. But the goose, having had enough, cried out to them, "If you want to walk over this man, you have got to come over, and until you do he will walk over you."

Instead of coming over they only drew back, as they muttered to themselves, "He must be the prince of devils, and it is the sort of man that keeps the Bark afloat, for no other but Lucifer ever showed such pluck."

"Indeed," at length they cried out, "we will never come over and shake hands with that man; he has scratched us too often; why, we can see the prints of his nails now in our palms."

"But you know," cried the goose, "that those prints make him immortal, so you might as well say you will never come over, if you are going to wait until that man dies, for, like his Creator, he will live to all eternity."

"Ah," said the "martyrs," "it is easy to see you are

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afraid of him now, and are trying to flatter him, hoping to get round him."

"Well," retorted the goose, "it is more than you can do, for the only way to flatter him is to speak the truth, and that is what he has been trying to teach you, but you proved more than his match, as he has not been able to knock it into you yet; so you see that you have the best of him at last, so give him up, and let me go for somebody else."

That compliment from the goose rather set them up; it showed that although they had seen him beat the devil, yet they had been able to resist him. As they clearly saw the goose was afraid of him, they told her to go for Father Eel, and see if she could skin him.

"I think," said the goose, "a little clipping would improve him."

"Humph," exclaimed the "martyrs," "if you clip him much there will be nothing left of him."

"You think so," returned the goose, "because you don't know him: "you will find that clipping will make a great deal more of him."

She flew to the guard boat, and alighted behind Father Eel's back, and began running her scissors from his shoulder down to his waist. Every one who saw her thought she was cutting out his spine, instead of which she was only ripping off his stays that confined a pair of wings.

"There," she exclaimed, as she threw them away, "the only thing that ailed him was, he was too tightly laced. It made him appear like an eel instead of an eagle, and that is the reason they abbreviated his name."

But to clip him was all that the goose could do; he was no sooner freed from the stays of *diplomacy*, and the

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cords of *policy*, than he soared so far above her that she could not reach him. She threw down her scissors and her broom, and began watching him with a secret envy, for she longed to imitate him.

When the "martyrs" beheld him in his unfettered state, they admired his course more than anything else they had yet seen, and they cried out to him to come down and teach them to fly as he did. Father Eagle, when he heard them, called out to his colleagues to come and help him. Many of them instantly flew towards him to show the "martyrs" how to fly on board.

While the "martyrs" were being instructed, one of them remarked to St. Peter, "Your crew, holy Father, would keep any ship afloat; we do not find its preservation a miracle."

"It is there," replied St. Peter, "that you make a mistake; for it is not my men who preserve my Bark, it is my Bark that makes them such as they are; all they can do is to defend it, but they do not keep it up, for it is the Bark *that preserves them.*"

"That remains to be seen," they answered, "for the goose has not fired her arrow at it yet. If it can stand that shock then we will give in, and believe it is protected by the hand of God."

St. Peter motioned to the goose to go ahead and fire her arrow at it as much as she chose. Many who knew what St. Peter meant turned pale, but none of the old seamen quailed; they rather laughed at the others for being afraid, since the Bark had survived the attacks of Voltaire. The goose went by herself, and began praying again for a bow, but instead of any clouds rising, the

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heavens and sea only seemed to brighten, and she came to St. Peter weeping because the sky was clear.

"My child," said the Pontiff, "did you imagine God was going to give you a ray of hope that you could shatter my Bark? If you would like to fire at it, do not doubt but that the devil will provide you with a bow and a string, too; you have only to get in a position to take good aim."

Upon hearing St. Peter utter those words she instantly hastened to the spot where she had fired at the galley, when she saw the two little devils still tarrying, weeping and sobbing their little imp's hearts out. Their countenances brightened, however, when they saw the goose coming their way, and running up to her, they promised if she would show them the way home, they would never harm her, and would in future do their best to serve her.

The goose did not trust them; she knew the devils serve us best when they are against us; and it would never do to let them hold the ribbon then, for instead of trying to pull it from her, they would let her have it, and then the arrow would drop, and she would fall on it. But she had faith in whatever St. Peter said, and took her position as if she were going to draw a bow, when a most gentlemanly looking man came before her and bowed.

"Madam," said he, addressing the goose, "allow me to pay you my respects. I trust you will not be offended if I acknowledge myself to be in love with you."

The goose opened her eyes wide, when she recognized her suitor, who was no less a personage than the grand master mason in whose regalia she had caught her foot when she rushed through the interior of the galley.

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"I am very glad to see you," she said, "for I long for a bow. Pray, procure me one."

"A beau!" exclaimed the grand master, as he clasped his hands and dropped on his knees, and looked up with sheep's eyes into her face. "I beg of you to take me for your beau; aye, more than that, I am come to offer you my heart and my hand."

"Alas!" sighed the goose, "that would be too much at a time, as I want to become a saint, and wish to practise holy poverty. But pray tell me, when did you become so enamoured of me?"

"I fell in love with you, madam, when you went through the ceremony."

"What must you have thought of me?" observed the goose, as she recollected the catastrophe.

"I thought you were fast," answered the grand master, "and that I should like to catch you."

"There is an obstacle to our union," said the goose; "I am already married."

"A very slight impediment in these days, madam," answered the mason. And he went through a pantomime to show the goose the different methods resorted to for putting a husband out of the way.

"But my husband is jealous," remarked the goose.

"Jealous!" ejaculated the grand mason, as his brow darkened and his hair stood on end, for the means that he proposed to get rid of a husband were those constantly resorted to by jealous men. He retreated a step, when his eye fell on the arrow.

"What are you going to do with that, madam?" he inquired.

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"I am going to fire it at St. Peter's Bark," the goose answered, "as soon as I can get a bow."

"Madam," exclaimed the mason, as he seized her hand and pressed it to his heart, "I understand you now, and it only increases my admiration for you more than tongue can express. It is a bow to bend you want, and not a beau to break. I beg that you will take me for both. Put me to any use, however servile, to fight that enemy. I am glad to see that we agree, and that you, like myself, are longing to see the human race free."

"I do," said the goose, "and this arrow is going to prove where liberty and security alone can be found."

"But tell me," said he, "of what use can I be?"

"I will take this ribbon," she said, "and tie it round your head, and you must hold it with your teeth; then I will attach it to your feet, and you must face the Bark, whilst I thrust you forward and draw the ribbon back, which will send the arrow off."

The "little ones" picked up the ribbon and gave it to papa, who handed it to the goose and told her to do her best. After he had caught it with his teeth, and she had tied it to his feet, he got very red as she drew back his head, trying to give spring to the string; but he heeded not the pain, for he motioned with his hand, as he pointed towards the Bark, that he would willingly suffer death, could he but see that enemy crushed. As the goose was taking aim she saw anxious looks on the Bark from those who had lately come on board, and she observed those who were still sailing on their oars were careful not to get on the other side of it, as they were sure the arrow would go through the Bark as it had gone through the "Branch." The goose, after taking steady aim, pushed

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the mason's body forward as she drew the ribbon back, and let go the arrow, and then ran towards the right.

The arrow no sooner struck the Bark than it snapped as if it had been thrown at a rock of adamant. It did not fall, because it had been sent with too much force, but it came swiftly flying back, its shaft lodging in the grand master's heart, cutting him as if he had been sawn in twain.

The little devils, seeing what had happened to papa, kicked up their heels as they clapped their hands, and exclaimed, "Won't we have a nice long funeral to-morrow; won't everybody wish that they had been papa.—Tra, la, la, tra, la, la." After turning summersaults, they took the ribbon and tied papa together, and throwing him across their shoulders, they started to carry him home, for they recognized one of their brothers standing near the remains of the galley, and they knew that hell could not be far off, for this brother was a devil who was never allowed to rove. They had only gone a few steps when they heard something fall out of papa's vest pocket. They instantly stopped to pick it up, but were not quick enough; before they could put their paws upon it the goose had it in her bill, and was swimming swiftly towards the Bark with it. As soon as she reached it she threw herself at St. Peter's feet, and gave him that which for centuries he had sought for in vain. Never did St. Peter appear more pleased, for he held in his hand the HEART OF THE AGE.

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CHAPTER XXIII.

The news was no sooner spread abroad that St. Peter had got the heart of the age, than everybody made a rush for his Bark. Such a scrambling to get on board had never been seen before, because they knew that St. Peter would soon have back the cock, and they were all curious to see his heart. St. Peter put it on a piece of flannel, and laid it on the top of the binnacle, so that by passing round it they could get a good view of it.

It was as cold as ice, as hard as a flint, as dry as a withered leaf in autumn, as heavy as a piece of lead.

In their eagerness to behold it, somebody chanced to drag off the piece of flannel, and when the heart fell upon the deck it sounded like the fall of a marble.

St. Peter got the gall that was in the pot of GRAVITY, and was now filled with the tears of CONTRITION, and set it to heat over the flames of CHARITY. He then picked up the heart and dropped it in it, and covering it up, told some of his children to watch it, but not to look in the pot or touch it; that the devils would be sure to be after it, as they considered they had the best right to it; but as the age had no right to give it to them, they need not scruple about preventing them getting possession of it again.

St. Peter then left them in charge of the pot, and went to the gangway to help the "martyrs" and oarsmen on board, for the guard boats had just rowed them over to the cross. He gave each of them his hand, and helped

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to pull them up, except when he chanced to discover among them a man who had once belonged to his Bark. Instead of giving him his hand, he would take him by the ears, and then push him with his foot towards the mast.

They were no sooner on board than they all regretted not having come over before, as they had come just too late to behold the heart of the age in its callous state, as it fell from the pocket of the freemason's vest. St. Peter gave them to understand it was a punishment they deserved for their obstinacy in having resisted the truth so long. But it seemed greater than they could bear, and they were not at all resigned. So they at once made a rush upon those who were watching the pot, and tried to drive them away, so as to take their place, hoping to get a look into it. The committee St. Peter had set to guard it made a courageous resistance, but getting exhausted, they cried out to St. Peter for reinforcements, it being easier to keep off the devils than it was to hold the converts at bay, who were determined to have their own way.

Many were scandalized at their behaviour, and believed that they had come on the Bark with the sole intention of getting hold of the pot and carrying it away. St. Peter defended the converts from such an unjust imputation, and told his children that men did not become saints in a day; that these men, having just come over, retained their old natures; that they had only got rid of their burdens, and had been provided with arms to conquer themselves, but that they had not even learned the use of them yet; so he begged his children to have a little patience, and try to save themselves by setting such examples of virtue, as might help to save those who

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might be compared to raw recruits, never having faced a cannon nor fired off a gun, and having as yet no experience in the simple act of loading one.

While St. Peter was busily engaged restoring order, something arose before them, looking like a pyramid sailing on the water. It was guided by the light that shone above the mast on St. Peter's Bark, and its base was lighted up by the lantern. It moved on the sea like an impregnable fort, capsizing and sinking whatever opposed it.

St. Peter no sooner espied it than he clasped his hands, and raised his eyes to heaven, and said, "God be praised for having united the Catholic press. It is one of the greatest blessings He has conferred upon me. We will now make quick work with the rest of the sects."

St. Peter was not mistaken, for whenever this floating pyramid approached them they were sure to be crushed or submerged by its massive weight, and they quickly rowed over to the Bark, and cried out to St. Peter to take them on board. The pyramid kept steadily at work night and day until the sea was rid of them.

St. Peter was then going to sit down to rest, when a child ran up to him, and said, "Holy Father, cockie is alive again."

"How do you know?" inquired St. Peter; "did you look in the pot?"

"No, holy Father, but I saw the cover raised up."

St. Peter then went to see if it was time to take him out, but he could not get near the pot, there were so many huddled around it trying to peep into it without touching it.

"There," exclaimed St. Peter, "this was the beginning

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of all our woes. Now I tell you once for all to let the cock alone: if you do not, all our miseries will be renewed."

In trying to reach the pot he chanced to spy the goose, and he felt that the moment had come to put her obedience to the test. He beckoned her to approach him, which attracted the attention of the rest, who supposed that he was going to reward her. St. Peter spoke to her so low that none but Father Eagle, besides herself, heard what he said. He had no sooner uttered the last words than the goose dropped down on the deck as if she had been struck dead. She was not dead, however; she had only fainted, while Father Eagle's eyes filled with tears of compassion. Many of the passengers hovered round the father to inquire what St. Peter had said to her. The father's voice was too choked for utterance, and to all their inquiries he only replied by shaking his head, while a dozen questions were put to him at once. At length, when he recovered from his emotion, and was able to speak, one of them asked if the Pope had ordered her to walk over red hot ploughshares.

"Oh, no," sobbed out the father, as he dried his eyes, "worse than that."

"Oh, I know," suggested a woman, "he told her to shave her head."

"Worse than that," ejaculated the Jesuit, with a renewed gush of tears.

"Did he tell her to clean the interior of the 'Branch?'"

"Something more difficult still," answered the Jesuit.

"Oh, we give it up, then," they rejoined unanimously, "for we cannot imagine anything worse than that."

"Well," replied the Jesuit, "you must not judge St.

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Peter rashly, and call him cruel and inhuman, for he always bids us do what he believes is for our best. He told her," here the Jesuit paused again, as he drew a long breath, "*he told her to go home and try to live with her husband.*"

"Oh, oh, oh," a hundred voices were heard to exclaim, "he wants her to become a martyr, he wants her to become a martyr. Will she obey ?"

"That remains to be seen," said the father; "as soon as she can speak we will ask her."

Meanwhile the goose recovered her speech, and the first thing she did was to ask St. Peter, "Will you give me time to return, holy Father ?"

"My child," answered St. Peter, "I have no time to spare; you must take your own time."

"Thank you, holy Father," answered the goose. And she got away from him as quickly as she could, lest he should change his mind. She then went by herself, and sat upon her broom, and took up her quill, with the feathered end of which she wiped away her tears, as if she were consoled. She was soon surrounded by the crew, who asked her what she was going to do.

"I am going to obey St. Peter to the letter," she answered; "I shall return to my husband, and take my time, too."

Their attention was now drawn to a child, who came rushing up to St. Peter in a great state of excitement, and measuring with her two forefingers, she said to the Pontiff, "Holy Father, cockie's feathers have grown so long."

St. Peter showed signs of impatience.

"Did I not tell you to let the cock alone ?"

"No one has touched him, holy Father," returned

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several voices; "we have been fighting the devils, who are determined to carry off the pot."

St. Peter then went to examine the pot, when sure enough what did he behold, when he took off the cover, but a beautiful full-grown cock. He was delighted with the result, and felt he had reason to rejoice, for he had got back his watchman, and he saw the time had come to take him out of the pot.

The greatest excitement now prevailed on board the Bark. As St. Peter carried him from the cross to the binnacle some of the converts rushed before him, supposing he was going to put him on top of the mast, as they imagined that must be the place for him since he had become so perfect, for there did not appear to be a blemish in him, and he looked in St. Peter's arms as passive as a lamb. St. Peter did not carry him far before he suddenly stopped. Those who were crowding round him supposed he was deliberating how he should climb the mast, instead of which St. Peter stooped over, opened the door of the binnacle, and shut the cock up with the cat.

Disapprobation was depicted on every face that St. Peter should put him in such a place, and they all remembered what the State used to say, that "St. Peter only wished to get hold of him to put him out of the way."

St. Peter's back was hardly turned before they gathered round the binnacle and opened the door, just to get a peep at him, when those who beheld him started back aghast, for there was the cat licking the watch, and the FEAR OF THE LORD was brandishing his switch over him, while the little monitor CONSCIENCE was binding him fast. One man got so beside himself that in despair he jumped overboard. Immediately the monitor released the watch,

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who flew to the man as if he had been sent to rescue him. The man instantly caught hold of him as if he alone could save him. One of the converts remarked, as he saw the watch pulling the man along, "The watch is a good life preserver."

"Not as good as the cross," replied St. Peter.

The watch in the meanwhile was dragging the man along until he flew up and perched on the anchor's stock, the man all the while holding on to him as if determined never to let go of him. Every one then supposed that the watch was going to bring the man on deck, but he went no further than the anchor's stock, when he shook the man off and let him drop through the anchor's ring, the emblem of eternity.

"There," said St. Peter, as his crew threw out the cross and tried to save him, "I knew the watch could not be relied upon as a life preserver. He may keep a soul above water for a while, but he will be sure to launch him into eternity at some time."

The watch no sooner let the man drop than he wheeled about, and went of his own accord back into the binnacle or sentry box. More than a hundred men then threw themselves overboard, believing that that was all they would have to do to make the watch come out; but this time they were all disappointed, for the monitor held him back, and had not St. Peter thrown each of them a cross, every one of them might have been lost. When they got on board again they were in a great rage, and accused St. Peter of having held the watch back. But St. Peter assured them that it was all the work of the monitor, the brakeman, and the cat, who would not permit the watch to be used as a life preserver, unless each of

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them got out a license to use him as such, which must be signed by one of the crew.

His words, instead of pacifying them, only increased their ill humour, for they saw in them a mere pretence on the part of St. Peter, who wished to throw obstacles in the way to prevent the watch being used as a life preserver, for they much preferred him to the cross, in spite of the danger.

St. Peter, as soon as he could make himself heard, said to them, "You are right, my children, for I am obliged to put some check on your insane attachment to the watch, otherwise you would be for ever jumping overboard, and he would be worn out, picking you up and letting you drop. He would not be worth a fig for a watch. Instead of knowing what time it was, he would get all the hours of the night mixed up, and in the morning I should find him either asleep or drunk."

St. Peter could see by their exasperated looks that they were anything but resigned, and he knew it behoved him to deal with them gently, or they might raise a mutiny, and then CONSCIENCE would get the first blow, and he was determined to defend her if it cost him his life; but he was going to act with prudence, and use conciliatory means as far as they would go.

"My dear children," he said, "you must know that the sentry has to live under discipline as well as yourselves, but if you take to noticing him, talking with him, and playing with him whenever you like, you will certainly corrupt him. I would just as soon have a highwayman on board for all the good he would be worth. Now go about your work, and try and forget him."

"It seems to us," they replied, "that you might give

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him a better berth, then we should be satisfied; but to see him thrust into that box like a prisoner of war appears to us unkind and even cruel."

"It appears so to you," answered St. Peter, "because you have not yet divested yourselves of your false opinions and prejudices. The great mistake you always made was to give the sentry the position you did. He was never intended to be anything but a common soldier, a mere private; but you made him general, and see all the misery he has brought into the world by your permitting him to lead your forces. The mischief so done is incalculable, and yet you are so blindly infatuated with him that, if I were to permit it, you would give him the lead again. But you must make up your minds to this, that he can never command on this ship; he has to submit to the brakeman and monitor like every one else."

St. Peter then left them, and went to the helm. He had not been there long when he observed it was unusually quiet on board, but he felt it was a stillness that foreboded a storm, for looking around him, he saw the converts were collected together in groups, and appeared to be discussing a question, upon the solution of which the peace of nations hung. He was curious to know what this new question was that had lately arisen, and so thoroughly engaged their thoughts. He passed by one of the groups without being observed; they were so absorbed in catching the slightest word that one or the other might have to say.

"Don't be getting angry now," said an ex-martyr; "but I always believe in giving justice where justice is due. I assure you that he belongs to the Jews, for he crowed in Caiphas' yard."

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"You cannot prove it," said an ex-communist. "It does not say that St. Peter saw him crowing, he only heard him, and the cock might have been over the wall."

While they were reflecting over this supposition an advocate of State rights remarked, "You all know the sceptre had gone out of Juda's hands, and all the courts at that period by right of conquest belonged to Cæsar. It is possible that the cock crowed on the wall, where St. Peter not only heard him, but saw him too. But hearing him and seeing him does not give him any right or title to him. The cock would be awarded to the State in any court of law."

This advocate was interrupted by a firm believer in ecclesiastical supremacy, who here interposed, and spoke loud enough to be heard by all.

"Listen to me, gentlemen. Did not the serpent belong to Moses, although he got him on Pharaoh's grounds? Don't you always see Tobias with the dog, St. John the Baptist with the lamb, St. Mark with the lion, and St. Luke, too, always has the bull, while the eagle is always to be seen with St. John, all which goes to prove that St. Peter has an indisputable right to the cock."

"Ah," said St. Peter to himself, when he witnessed the vehemence with which this speaker closed his remarks, "there must be a stop put to this at once, or the Church will again be devastated with intestine broils."

He went quickly and brought out a bull, which he let loose on the ship, and gave orders to his crew to tie a red rag* on every one they heard discussing any question in regard to the cock. The bull soon succeeded in dispersing

* A severe penance.

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the groups, and the terrible storm that threatened the Bark was averted by this extreme measure.

St. Peter saw, however, that the hour had come for him to define the cock's position, and to whom he belonged. He believed that the people's minds were now sufficiently enlightened to accept his definition as the true one. When they learned that that was his intention they all drew closely around him to hear what he said, for it was the only question betwixt Church and State they took the slightest interest in.

"My dear children," said St. Peter, "the cock is one of God's most precious gifts, but, like the lantern reason, he must be kept in his proper place, otherwise, instead of proving a blessing to us, he will only prove a curse. I will first define to you his crowing, and then you will understand why sinners were so loath to hear him crow.

"The crowings of the cock are those impulses of nature that we cannot always suppress, such as pride, anger, impatience, vanity, selfishness, flights of the imagination, and the rest, too numerous to particularize. When we are striving for perfection they often annoy us, but they should not grieve us or discourage us, unless we give them our consent. On the contrary, we should make use of them as we would of so many whips to drive us ahead. Instead of stopping to contend with them, we should redouble our watch, and be thankful they waked us up; for our Lord commanded us to watch, so as to be ready for His coming, and to make that watch easy He gave us the cock, lest when He came and knocked at the door the little monitor Conscience might be sleeping; but whenever the cock crows he is sure to wake her up, unless she has been drugged or badly brought up. So whenever you

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hear the cock crow never stop to think of him or his crowing, any more than you would think of a bell and its ringing that summoned you to your duty, but go diligently to work, and examine the secret chambers of your heart, and see if they are prepared to receive the King of glory, and if the door is open for Him to enter there; then ask yourselves how many times you have denied Him since you were holding sweet converse with Him." Here St. Peter's voice faltered as he continued: "I once had to answer thrice, but our Lord did not predict that I should deny Him again; and now it is my great delight, when I hear the cock crow, though I cannot help weeping over the past, to be consoled with the thought that from that day to this I have been always true to my dear Lord and Master.

"One of the great mistakes the so-called reformers made was that they were afraid to hear the cock crow, for they did not wish to have their CONSCIENCE awakened, because she pricked them so. Therefore, instead of keeping the cock down where they could hear him crow, they let him go and perch as high as he chose. But, alas! when they found it for their interest to catch him and to keep him low, they discovered when too late it was not such an easy thing to do. For even when they caught him they could not hold him, and after they had mutilated him they could not keep him still long enough to cure him.

"In despair of being able to manage him, they began to follow him, and then to imitate him, which ended in their bowing down and adoring him, and they kept it up until I was able to get hold of him again, when I was obliged to almost annihilate him before I could conquer

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him. It was a hard process for him to go through; so if you are his true friends you will help me to keep him to his proper sphere, for your happiness depends upon it as much as his own."

"But, holy Father, where you have put him he is bound so tightly by CONSCIENCE that he cannot get away without knocking down the FEAR OF THE LORD, and getting rid of the cat with nine tails. It does not appear to us like fair play."

"If you will look about you," replied St. Peter, "you will see that JOY has gone into the sentry box, and has shut itself up with the watch of its own accord."

When they were convinced of this truth, that JOY was with the watch, they became resigned to St. Peter's definition of his position, and they all hung closer about the Pontiff than ever, and looking up into his face, they inquired, with a beseeching tone, "Do tell us, holy Father, to whom he belongs: to the Church, the State, or the Synagogue."

They nearly smothered St. Peter as they crowded round him to catch every syllable he uttered when he opened his mouth to define that momentous question.

"My dear children," said St. Peter, "as he is one of God's gifts, he belongs to every man, woman, and child. But it is a gift that gives us a great deal of trouble, for it requires the exercise of all the other gifts, the locomotive* too, and an urn full of tools to keep him *where he belongs.*"

They could hardly wait to hear St. Peter through, this definition pleased them so, namely, that the watch was not a prerogative of the Church and State alone, but

* The will.

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that every human being, no matter how abject his state in life might be, could say that he was his own.

"But, St. Peter," burst forth the converts all in a breath, with a reproachful look, "why did you not define this question before? See the misery you might have spared."

"No," replied St. Peter, "I have spoken in the right time, because your minds were not prepared to receive a solution of this question before. I had to wait, until I got him in his right place, and you were resigned to accept his position, and felt that you could not take him out of his place without my permission, unless you ran a risk of going to hell. That is one reason the Church is slow; it is not because it has not made up its mind, but it is obliged to wait until your minds are prepared to receive the truth; otherwise, instead of accepting it, you would reject it with all your might, and instead of it being a benefit to you, I should be only increasing your responsibility, which would make your punishment a great deal worse."

The truth St. Peter's words contained was so plain, that it carried conviction with it. No one then doubted his infallibility, and they were determined to show their devotion to him by doing all in their power to keep the watch in his right place, believing it was the only way they could possess JOY and PEACE.

They had hardly begun to taste the sweets of repose, when late in the night the winds arose and tossed the ship to and fro. Suddenly there is a flash of light, and a clap of thunder that shakes the Bark as if it were dashed against a rocky shoal.

Every heart was seized with fear, when suddenly the cock crowed, and the monitor cried out: "All's well!"

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Instantly every face was lighted by a smile, as they took a peep into themselves to see if their souls were ready to receive their King, and they asked themselves how many times they had denied Him since they had been holding sweet converse with Him. Again the cock crowed, and CONSCIENCE answered, "All's well," and their hearts began to watch, while their senses dropped to sleep again.

In the morning the sea was calm, and the sun shone forth as they were awakened by the crowing of the cock, and the lowing of a bull that came rushing through the Bark as if he had joyful news to tell. His horns were trimmed with flowers, while around his neck hung rows of silvery bells. Every child was upon deck trying to get hold of him, to climb on his back, and make him carry them along. They would catch hold of his horns, while the bull would toss them off as playfully as a fawn. He had been sent to proclaim that there was to be a jubilee on board.

The new passengers no sooner heard it announced than they wanted to know if they could throw down their arms.

"No, no; on the contrary," St. Peter replied, "the jubilee is proclaimed for you to brighten them up, and begin the drill so as to be ready for war."

"War," they cried, "why we thought it was over since all the sects had been brought over."

"War over!" exclaimed St. Peter. "Why you have hardly begun to conquer yourselves, which can only be achieved in time. After you have gained that victory, you must go forth and see if you can vanquish the Israelites. And then there is Buddha, Vishnu, and Islam, to be taken and thrown down. But before we attack them, let us show them that we lead better lives

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than they do themselves, that our sovereigns can pass through the streets without being murdered, and those who teach the doctrines of Christ are no longer driven from their homes like beasts. Each of you must set to work as if the salvation of the infidels depended on himself."

On St. Peter's Bark all now had the appearance of a military camp, but many of the new recruits soon got weary, and came to St. Peter looking discouraged.

"Holy Father," said they, with a dejected mien, "we fear we shall never see the Bark move towards the unbelievers."

"Courage, my lads," replied St. Peter, "what is the matter now?"

"Alas, the matter is," they answered, "that we have begun too late; our lives will be spent before we have succeeded in conquering ourselves."

"Never mind that," replied St. Peter, "persevere and do what you can, consoling yourselves with the reward that is promised to those who begin at the close of the day."

"But we do not wish to enter the kingdom of heaven empty handed," they urged.

"There is no need of that," St. Peter returned; "for there are your children: try and train them to do what you regret not being able to do yourselves, and the harvest they reap will still be yours, for you planted the seeds of truth in their souls; and those who have no children of their own, let them take orphans, and give them a home."

That thought infused into them a new life, and the Bark now appeared like a man-of-war, where every child was learning to fight, and, like the Spartans of old, their

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mothers were by their side spurring them on to face the foe, while they helped them to buckle their armour on.

In the midst of it all a question arose as to of whom they should seek counsel and aid when they had left their homes, and found themselves perhaps abandoned and alone. While they were asking for light to see what course they should take, they saw a beautiful picture* in the sky, borne by angels, gradually descending with it towards the earth, until it suddenly disappeared in the interior of the Bark. Every one on board tried to follow it, but the door of FREEDOM was locked, and they rushed to St. Peter and begged him to open it. Some of them were vexed that there should be a lock on the door at all.

St. Peter, overhearing their murmurings, said to them, "Well may you complain of that lock, for it gives us all trouble enough; it is the greatest OBSTACLE to our happiness. It is the effect of sin, a gift of our first parents. Our Lord gave His life to remove it, and left us the means to get rid of it. It requires effort; but do not be discouraged, children, persevere."

For some of them St. Peter could open the door easily; for others he could not open it at all, on account of the quantity of luggage that was piled over the lock. This luggage was the penalties due for their sins. Those who had earned plenty of INDULGENCES found that they served them like ready money in getting their luggage removed from the door, where the devils had placed it to block it up, as it is for the interest of hell to prevent souls entering the interior of the Bark.

St. Peter helped them as much as he could, and as fast as he got it from the door, with their own hands

* See "Our Good Counsellor, a key to 'St. Peter and the Cock.'"

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they pitched it overboard, so that in a very short time the ship was cleared of it all, and every one was able to enter the interior of the Bark, which they no sooner reached than they ran after the others to find out the course taken by the angels who carried the picture. At length they discovered it near the tabernacle, and as they gathered around it the interior of the Bark resounded with hymns of praise to our Lady of Good Counsel, the name of the Madonna that had been miraculously borne there, and they knew the angels had brought it there for them to go to in quest of counsel and assistance. St. Peter had followed them into the interior of the Bark, like a shepherd watching over his sheep, that were seeking fresher pastures. While they were praying before the picture, he silently opened the door of the tabernacle, and the fountain of life streamed forth. They were penetrated by its strengthening waters, which so inebriated them that each of them was seized with an irresistible impulse to sacrifice himself for the good of his neighbour, in order to show his love for his Saviour who gave them such a world of delight in themselves. They then began to wander like happy children through the interior of the Bark, trying to explore its endless mysteries, when they discovered the goose ascending a peak that they believed insurmountable. They wondered how she got in, for no one saw her pass through the door at St. Peter's feet, and they suspected she must have come through the spring; yet many doubted that that could be: they imagined that way was reserved for holy souls, and that it would never open for such a sinner as she.

She was so intent making her way up the pathless steep, where she was obliged to wade to her shoulders in matted

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brambles, that she did not perceive that others observed her, and were curious to know what she was seeking that was worth so much labour and pain. St. Peter alone divined her intention, and he said to the converted philosophers, who kept close to him:

"She is seeking the cell where the FEAR OF THE LORD dwells."

They then remembered how St. Peter had once described it to them, and they smiled when they recollected their eagerness to get hold of SUCCESS, the gay little kid that he told them should always be kept down by the FEAR OF THE LORD in the bottom of the ship. They imagined that the goose, knowing where it was kept, was then in search of it, and if she got hold of it they were certain she would try to bring him on deck. They tried to follow her, because they were anxious to get a peep in the cell, but from where they stood it was impossible for them to overtake her, as that steep could only be gained by those who were led by an extraordinary way, and they must first pass through the spring. Still, there were other ways to reach that cell, but they were long and tedious, and very monotonous; yet they were determined to push ahead, so they took out their rosaries and began telegraphing to heaven for help. To their great joy, St. Peter, who was always able to help them, showed them a spot where they could pass, though it required great effort and faith to go through it. At length, as their strength failed, they dreaded taking another step either forwards or backwards; but he gave them to understand that there was no standing still in the interior life, and he taught those who had not the strength to raise their hands, to raise their

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eyes, and those who were too weary to do either he encouraged them to desire to raise their hearts, all of which were most effective prayers, and moved the powers of heaven to help them. As there is always an oasis in the dreariest desert,* they finally reached a spot where they could repose and refresh themselves. Instead of murmuring, they offered an oblation of thanks for all their sufferings, and began preparing for greater sacrifices and efforts, when suddenly, as if God had relented for having tried their patience, a mountain before them disappeared, like the darkness of night at the approach of morn. Before them was a chasm; by peering into it they could see a garden, in the centre of which was the sepulchre, or the FEAR OF THE LORD'S cell. The atmosphere was so pure that the mountains and precipices which surrounded the garden seemed to possess a thousand tongues to echo the faintest whisper from hill to vale. As they sat gazing on the scene they espied the goose again, whom they had forgotten in their efforts to reach the cell. From her position she seemed to be further from it than they, for she was standing on one of the highest cliffs that towered above the plain. They could see she was not idle, for she kept throwing down moss, until there was a pile at the foot of the cliff the size of a mound of hay, and they wondered if she dared jump off that giddy height. The thought had hardly passed their brains when they saw her throw herself down as though she were making a leap for fun.

"Ah," several voices simultaneously exclaimed, "she has broken her neck this time."

But a voice resounded over the plain, "Only a little

* In the deserts of the spiritual life.

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sprained." And then she got up and went skipping along as if a rapid motion would set it all right again.

She kept up the pace until she came to a gulf in the earth, at the bottom of which was a maëlstrom, out of which spouted a whirlpool of clay, that went spinning around at a lightning speed, as if bidding defiance to anything living to pass. But the goose stood before it and smiled defiance, as she had been accustomed to pass through a great deal worse. Closing her eyes, she made the sign of the cross, and then plunged into it, but instead of letting her sink, its force was so great that it spun her round and round, until at length, as if tired of the game, it dashed her headlong on the other side of the gulf, where she instantly got up and went plodding on her way through thickets and briars, as she clambered over rugged cliffs, until she reached the garden where the sepulchre lay. The guard then arose and tried to prevent her entrance. The gay kid of Success began frolicking about her, as if he were trying to decoy her away. She caught him up and gave him a caress, and then put him gently down again. Then came the gazelle of Mirth, snuffling about her as if he were everything she needed to enjoy in this world. She gave him such a hug that he could hardly catch his breath, and then he seemed glad to run away. The fox of Sagacity then took its place, looking very wise and knowing. She took up the chain of Continuity that was fastened to his neck, and winding it round the pillar of Judgment, she fastened him to it again by his tail, so that he could not approach her any more. The weasel of Acuteness she stroked, and envied him his power of keeping awake; but she wondered how the little cony of Contentment could be satisfied to burrow in the

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earth, when he possessed such nimble legs, but she soon divined it was the FEAR OF THE LORD that kept him down, lest he should run away and change his name. The mastiff of WATCHFULNESS began barking to frighten her away, but she was glad to hear him as she hastened by him, knowing he would keep her awake.

She had now reached the door of the sepulchre, and as she tried to move the stone* that was rolled up against it she found it came up to her waist. She withdrew a little from it, to take a survey, to see if she could get in by any extraordinary way. Alas! there was none; the sepulchre was hewn out of one solid piece of stone, and there was no chance of burrowing under its foundations, or prying under its eaves; there was only one way to enter, which was by the door, and the stone must first be removed, and she felt that no angel was there to do it for her then, for the place was enveloped in a thick gloom, the dawn of Satan's day. She climbed upon the stone, and began knocking at the door, but the winds whizzing round the sepulchre soon blew her off, and she then nestled down beside the stone trying to get warm. She was soon up again, knocking louder than before, while she cried, "Lord, Lord, let me in, let me in. I am hungry, I am cold, I am weary, for I have come a long way over a rough road, and my feet are sore: so I implore Thee, dearest Lord, let me in." She kept knocking and knocking until her hands got sore, and she cried, "Lord, Lord," until her voice grew hoarse.

At length she sent up a pitiful moan, as she cried, "I am afraid, Lord, for I am alone." Distinctly then she heard a voice reply, "Dat's a lie!" And a big black devil appeared standing by her side, which the goose did not

* Symbol of persecution.

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perceive, for her eyes were fixed upon the stone, hoping every moment it would move. The devil then put his hand to his mouth, and threw his voice as the ventriloquists do, so as to make whoever is clamouring to get in believe that the voice is coming from the tomb, which is one of the most discouraging things the soul has to pass through. As the goose continued knocking, the devil said to her, in a bullying, blustering way, "Stop dat knocking, stop dat knocking, stop dat knocking, I say." And then, to console her for the words she had just heard, he appeared in the guise of an angel, and offered her a pinch of snuff.* The goose shook her head, and then he showed her his rope,† and asked her if she would like to jump to get warmed up, or perhaps she might prefer having an end tied to a tree, so as to swing—by the neck if she chose. Still the goose declined, until he showed her his sieve,—the devil's cradle,—a temptation not so easy to resist, as the wires are made of perplexities and anxieties, and before the goose was aware of it the devil had her in it, and was shaking her thoroughly. Still the goose did not cease to cry, "Let me in, Lord; let me in, Lord;" while the devil, to silence her and drown her cries the more, as he shook her in his sieve, dashed her against the wall, and every time he sent her bang against it he shrieked, "Oh, you had better stop dat knocking at de door! You had better stop dat knocking at de door!"

To distract her mind from these discouraging words, that seemed to issue from the tomb, she began singing, which appeared to fret the devil sorely, and she sang in spite of his sifting her and banging her against the wall.

* Despair. † Iniquity.

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GOOSE.

I once did love an Oxford man,
Whose name was Sammy Brown;
He plighted me his heart and hand,
And I became his own.
He played a jarring harp all night,
And never wanted pay,
And used to wake the devil up
Before the break of day.

DEVIL, *(throwing his voice.)*

Oh! shoo da!
Shoo da!
Shoo da!
You must tink no one's listening at dis door.
If you mean Sam,
If you mean Sam,
'Cause you know de devil never slept at all.
So stop dat lying!
Stop dat lying!
Stop dat lying!
Stop dat lying!
'Cause Sam never let the devil sleep at all.

[*Aside.*] Why, de *pitch* of dat harp kept all de devils in hell awake!

GOOSE.

Our dispositions were unlike;
His was grim, and mine was gay:
I always liked to sleep at night,
But he slept in the day.

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When he was suffering with heat,
I from the cold would cry;
And I was always hungry,
But he was always dry.

DEVIL.

Oh! whoo da!
Whoo da!
Whoo da!
Oh, you must tink my memory's in decline,
If you mean Sam,
If you mean Sam,
'Cause you know dat man was *never*, *never* dry.
So stop dat lying!
Stop dat lying!
Stop dat lying!
Stop dat lying!
'Cause you know dat Sam was drinking all de time.

[*Aside.*] Dat was one of *his* gifts.

GOOSE.

I used to love to be alone,
But he would always say:
Without his darling demijohn
He could not live a day.
When I would try to hide his pet,
He'd throw me on the bed,
And held me there to lecture me,
And beat me on the head.

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DEVIL.

Oh, stop da!
Stop da!
Stop da!
'Cause you know I always praised up Sam for dat.
'Cause you knew Sam,
'Cause you knew Sam,
Couldn't even say his prayers widout his pet.
Oh, go on knocking,
Go on knocking,
Go on knocking,
Go on knocking,
Go on knocking was my motto in dem days.

[*The devil grinned as he exclaimed:*] Oh, dem game prayers! Hasn't dey got de fine rank smell!

GOOSE.

Deluded he said I'd been for years,
In regard to my defects;
That blots like maps were on my soul,
Which I deemed little specks.
So he opened my eyes with a carving knife,
To show me my complaint;
My thoughts alone convinced me then
That I was not a saint.

DEVIL, *(consolingly.)*

Oh, hush da!
Hush da!
Hush da!

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You must tink den I told you a big lie!
'Cause I always said,
I always said,
Dat you was de biggest saint dat ever lived.
So stop dat pining,
Stop dat pining,
Stop dat pining,
Stop dat pining,
'Cause dere never was a saint *just like* yourself.

[*Aside.*] Don't I know? 'Cause didn't I help dem Methodists bring you up?

GOOSE.

Thus stripped of my delusions,
I crossed the briny deep,
And have sought for Thee through wild ways,
Till the thorns have pierced my feet.
And now, dear Lord, I thank Thee
For giving that man to me;
Hadst Thou wedded me to another,
I might ne'er have come to Thee.

DEVIL.

Oh, hey da!
Hey da!
Hey da!
Don't tank de Lord for giving you dat man,
If you mean Sam,
If you mean Sam,
'Cause you know you always owed him to de devil.

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So stop dat cheating,
Stop dat cheating,
Stop dat cheating,
Stop dat cheating,
'Causé you know 'twas to de devil you owed Sam.

[*The devil here whispered as he winked,*] "Dat's one of my gifts."

GOOSE.

I will always love Thy Mother,
For her gracious care of me;
'Twas under her safe guidance
I found my way to Thee.
I'm chilly, bruised, and hungry,
I am weary and alone;
Holy Mary! make the angels
Come and roll away this stone.

DEVIL, *(blusteringly.)*

Ah ba! go along wid you da! you've gone and done it now, you have indeed!
When you sing like dat you know de devil has got to leave!

The devil runs, and turning his sieve upside down, lets the goose out of it, while the gloom that surrounds the sepulchre is instantly dispersed, and a star appears, whose beams, falling on the seal that fastened the stone to the door, melts it like snow in a broiling sun, and the stone is tossed away like a ball. A flash of light could then be seen issuing from the door as it silently opened, and quickly closed, and the goose could be seen no more.

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Nothing could equal the surprise of those who were watching the goose, and they wondered how she managed to effect an entrance into the sepulchre all unprepared as she was: she had apparently no light, no shroud, in fact none of the ordinary requisites; yet she had got in, they had seen it.

St. Peter alone was not surprised, and he said to those who had been watching her: "Many of you doubt that MIRACLES are done in these days, I hope you will now believe in them, as you have just seen one. They frequently occur in the interior of the Bark, to those who have strong faith in God, and who pray to Him unceasingly, while they rely for guidance, protection, and help, on the Virgin Mary."

St. Peter's explanation did not comfort them: instead of bowing their hearts in silent submission to the will of God, who lavishes His graces on whomsoever He chooses, they were seized with spiritual envy when they saw that little reprobate of a goose (for such she was considered by all,) enjoy spiritual favours and advantages to which they had hardly dared to aspire, and they said to St. Peter, "We will give her a trial if ever she crosses our path again!"

"No, no," St. Peter rejoined, "you must let the goose alone, for I have given her trial enough, and more might kill her, notwithstanding she is tough. But she has some important work to do for us yet, and my motto is that if you want an ass to work well, you must not fret it too much, or it will kick and raise the dust, that will blow in our faces."

Then, turning to Father Eagle, one of them said, "What

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right has she to confess her husband's faults? She had better confess her own."

"She undoubtedly knows," replied the Jesuit, "that her husband has confessed her's *long ago, and to both hemispheres too;* and we do not know what her intention may have been, it may have been very pure."

They all doubted, but the Jesuit insisted. "We cannot judge her. She may have done it to warn others not to marry in haste, or to try to convert him by opening his eyes as he did hers; or it may be she wished to console those who have made vows of celibacy, that they are not exposed to a life like hers. I can see nothing in the goose's life to envy."

"But," they interposed, "did she not enter the sepulchre, and is she not now in possession of the SECRET OF THE KING?"

"Alas!" replied Father Eagle, "and has she not paid dearly for it? Great consolations and joys are reserved for those whom God tries severely, and the goose, knowing it, rather courts persecution; those who have tasted the sweet fruits which spring from it become insatiable for more: and that may have been one of her motives for singing her song; it was like challenging the world to condemn her and say she was wrong."

Whilst Father Eagle and the new recruits were conversing, the mountain which had disappeared to let them view the sepulchre had returned to its place: discouragement and impatience then took possession of them lest it might never move again; and they hastened on deck, where their attention was drawn to a massive structure making for the Bark, which some of them mistook for an iceberg, others for a floating cliff. They instantly gave the alarm,

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and cried to heaven for help. St. Peter no sooner got out his spy-glass than he recognized the synagogue, and before he could consult with his cardinals, or come to any decision, the whole ship was thrown into the greatest excitement, for nothing could be seen but affrighted faces, screaming out at the top of their voices: "The Israelites are coming! The Israelites are coming!"

When the cardinals heard these cries they sprang to their feet, recollecting the German Ambassador's words, and they reproached themselves for not being prepared for the worst. St. Peter immediately stationed a force round the sentry-box, for he was certain that the cock was the cause of the war. The troops wanted to fire upon them at once, but St. Peter ordered them to wait, and see if some compromise might not be made, before they resorted to bloodshed. His proposal, instead of calming the troops, excited them more, and the undisciplined ones swore that they would lay down their lives rather than allow the Jews to carry off the cock alive. When St. Peter saw the spirit of insubordination brewing on board, and the large forces of Israelites approaching the Bark, he put on his armour, and called on the Lord to have pity on them all; and that, after having achieved the great triumph of getting back the cock, they might not be subjected to the humiliation of giving him up. His grief and anxiety were soon, however, changed into joy, for as the synagogue came nearer, he beheld the floating pyramid behind it, pushing it on. He then was convinced that everything was well, for he had confidence in the press that was now defending him.

If it had been the violent ones, who had lately been blown up, he would have been greatly alarmed, suspecting

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it was one of their manœuvres to defend him, which always ended in his Bark receiving the hardest knocks; but when he saw the pyramid pushing the synagogue towards him, he assured his troops they had nothing to fear.

They had no sooner become calm than they beheld that the Israelites had on wedding garments. St. Peter then ordered his troops to throw down their arms, while he went to the helm to offer the Israelites his hand. But the synagogue, before touching the Bark, wished to explain the position of the Jews, and what had caused them so suddenly to turn.

"Your Holiness," said a Rabbi, "we have always believed in one God, but when we learned that the State had consented to give up the cock, and he was on your Bark, and that peace and order among you were restored, and everyone of you were happier than you had ever been before, we began to doubt, and instead of believing there was only one God, we came to the conclusion there must be three or four, for it appeared to us more than one God could have done. These men," said he, pointing to the United Catholic Press, "have explained to us that there are THREE in ONE. That Jesus whom we crucified is the Son in Whom these Three are revealed as One. That God intended the Mother of His Son should be Queen of Heaven, and Mother of all His children born in the Spirit, and we naturally supposed He does not mean her to be a mere lay figure, but that she is to have attributes befitting her State; and our conclusion was, with the help of so powerful a God, and the assistance of His Mother, and the angels and saints, whom we also believe were not idlers in this great work, it was possible for you to accomplish all that you have done. Therefore, St. Peter, we were

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obliged to believe that your doctrine is the true one, and that the Messiah had come. We felt it was useless to wait any longer, for we asked ourselves: If the Messiah whom we have been expecting came, could He do more?

"Still there was a difficulty to our coming over." Here the Rabbi hesitated, and his voice trembled as he continued: "I suppose your Holiness is aware that the synagogue always had the best claim to the cock, and that that was one of the hardest things for us to give up, for we believed if we became Christians we should have to renounce our claim to him. So we went assiduously to work to study the New Testament to see what claims you had on the cock, and we found you had none."

Upon hearing those words the Cardinals knit their brows, and the papal troops instantly caught up their arms.

"But," added the Rabbi, "we came to a passage that struck us very much, and seemed to open the door of the synagogue, which until then appeared for ever shut; but now its locks are broken, and its hinges are off, for we smashed them at once when we realized the meaning of that passage which impressed us so much. Then came your syllabus, defining the position of the cock and to whom he belonged, which has removed all doubts of your infallibility for aye."

St. Peter did not regret then all the trouble he had had about the cock, since he had been the cause of bringing about this result. But he wondered what passage the Rabbi had seen that had impressed him so much, and he asked him to show it to him.

"I have it here," the Rabbi replied, as he stepped upon the cross, which the instant he touched he knelt down and

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kissed, and his example was followed by his now happy race, who were all dressed in wedding garments like himself, for the crew and the press had been quietly to work to give St. Peter a joyful surprise. The Israelites then formed a circle round the ship. The sails of Faith and Hope were furled, and the sail of Charity was draped round the mast, which gave it the appearance of a shepherd carrying on his left shoulder a lamb. The lamb was Joy; it had to be held, or it would have skipped overboard with delight.

The Rabbi then drew from his bosom a scroll, and as he handed it to St. Peter he said: "Here are the words that impressed us so much. Our wives and our daughters have embroidered for them a background of gold, and their letters are formed of the most precious stones; our men wished to have a part in it too, and we have brought it to you as a present, to commemorate your union with the State. We knew that her majesty was partial to religious inscriptions, for we have often seen them hanging in her palaces and temples, but we never saw this one. It appears to have been overlooked, and we were glad of it, for we wished to present you both with something new."

When the Rabbi finished speaking, St. Peter unrolled the scroll, and put it on the sail of Faith, so that every one on board could see it, and his heart thrilled with delight, while tears gushed from his eyes as he read what was inscribed upon it; they were the words of our Lord when He said: "*Other sheep I have, that are not of this fold: them also I must bring; and they shall hear My voice: and there shall be* ONE FOLD AND ONE SHEPHERD!"

St. Peter did not utter a word; he considered that passage should be sufficient in itself to convince the whole

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world that Christ intended there should never be but ONE HEAD to His Church.

The Rabbi broke the silence. "Your Holiness," said he, "can well understand why this verse made so great an impression upon us. It simply portrays the Divine plan of the religious and moral government of the world, and we believed, from what we saw on your Bark, that the Messiah must have come, and as those were His words, we were convinced it was His will that all barriers of nationality should be broken down, and that all sects should be dissolved, and all mankind should be united in Him; it appeared to us, too, the most reasonable thing we could expect from an all-wise, omnipotent, and merciful God. We then looked about us for that visible head, as invisible things are clearly seen and understood by the things that are. So said St. Paul, whom we now believe to have been an upright Jew; and the only visible head we could find that represented the Good Shepherd with perfect consistency on earth is yourself, Holy Father.

"Then came your decision as to the ownership of the cock, which drew us right over, for there was nothing more to separate us. We have been waiting centuries for the Church and State to exterminate each other fighting over him, and then we intended to carry him off without making even a skirmish."

Upon hearing these words, the German Ambassador, addressing the cardinals in a loud voice, exclaimed: "Didn't I tell you so?"

As the Israelites dispersed through the Bark, they felt they were experiencing the joy of their forefathers when they entered the promised land, and one of them chanced

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to make that remark, when a Rabbi who overheard it replied:

"We are much happier now than our forefathers were when they entered the land of Canaan, because we now enjoy what they were still longing and waiting for; Canaan was only a figure of what we here possess."

As they sat down to repose in a shady nook in the interior of the Bark, they tuned their harps, and sang the songs of the New Jerusalem with lighter hearts than they had ever sung psalms of praise on the hills of Sion.

The deck of the Bark was crowded with old seamen watching the movements of the floating pyramid.* It retreated up the sea, as though it only went backwards in order to rush forwards with greater speed, for it soon came dashing against the synagogue, and smashed that hollow sepulchre to atoms. The waves instantly swallowed up the fragments, as if they had been eagerly waiting to devour them.

Nothing could now be seen but the floating pyramid, looking menacingly towards the remains of the galley, which was still covered over with a magnificent pall. One of the converted Israelites asked St. Peter why his press did not sink it.

"There are too many devils defending it now," said he; "we are waiting for a little goose, who lately passed through it, to write out what she saw in it; and the probabilities are, that all the devils in it now will make for her: then we are going to take our chance, and hope to be able to knock it down."

St. Peter had hardly uttered those words, when an object was seen on the water, that appeared in the distance

* Moderate Catholic press.

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like an evil spirit. Every eye was fixed upon it, as the floating pyramid passed it by without deigning to notice it. At length it came so near the Bark that one of the crew who was in a guard boat reached out his hand and picked it up, when behold, it was a demijohn, on which had been written:

"Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to mind?"

It was so blotted and blurred that it took considerable time to make the distich out, and it is doubtful if they would ever have been able to decipher it without the assistance of the goose, who was able to read it at a glance.

"I am sure," said she, "it is the shades of those who were blown up in the iron-clads who made it drift down here. They wish to be remembered." And she proposed on the spot to raise them a monument herself. St. Peter told her he had no objection, if she had the means; but he forebade her contracting any debts.

"I have all the materials I need," said the goose, "with the exception of a few mushrooms; if your Holiness will supply them, I will guarantee to provide the rest."

St. Peter consented without the least hesitation to give her a basket full. He was glad to get rid of them, for they were the good works they had left behind them, and without these mushrooms, and the demijohn, everyone might have forgotten that they "Once had been."

The goose took her broom, and ran the handle of it through the neck of the demijohn, and then planted the whisk part of it into the mushrooms, and wrote the

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following inscription on it with her quill, that was shaking like an aspen leaf:

"Sacred to the memory of those brave and disinterested, but headstrong men, who in their zeal to lead others to heaven, missed the way themselves, went to hell in slips, and have never been heard of since."

When it was finished, St. Peter and several of the crew went to see it, and while admiring its outlines, they all felt inclined to criticise it. "The handle on the demijohn," observed St. Peter, "makes it look lop-sided."

"Quite true," said the goose, "for it is thus a fair representation of the late editors of the *violent* Catholic press."

"I find it, however," remarked a Jesuit, "very unsteady."

"Well," inquired the goose, "were they ever anything else?"

"It looks top-heavy," said a cardinal.

"And were they not so?" asked the goose.

"But it has such a flimsy base," added an Englishman.

"Well," returned the goose, "they had none."

"The proportions may be correct," interposed St. Peter, "but that demijohn looks to be full of bad spirits."

"You know, holy Father, that they were never full of anything else."

As there was no contradicting what the goose said in regard to the correctness of the design, they passed on to the inscription, which appeared ambiguous to every one of them, for the word *slips* had so many definitions, it was impossible to know by it their exact condition and position when they went to hell, although every one was *satisfied*

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that they had gone. As they were pondering over the ambiguous word, the goose rejoined: "There my quill slipped, and I too am at a loss to know just how they went, but they went in slips of some kind, or my quill never would have put it in, for when it is drunk it is bound to speak the truth; I will give you a few definitions of the word, and you can take your choice. Slips mean: '*Unexpected and secret desertion.*' '*Taking leave on the sly.*' '*Portions of columns of newspapers.*' '*Errors.*' '*Narrow pews in churches.*'"

"There," interrupted St. Peter, "that is quite enough to choose from without going through the whole list."

At that instant they chanced to spy a trigger half way up the broom handle, half cocked, and the goose, pointing to it, remarked, "That is the way they always went off."

No one waited to hear more; they all started off at a run to get out of the way; but they were not quick enough: they had hardly turned their backs before they heard a snap, and the demijohn burst, and they felt something coming down on their heads which reminded them of other days, for it was like a shower of dry bits of willow, and pieces of broken glass.

"Ah!" sighed a cardinal, "that is the way they used to defend us, we always got mangled first. How these Americans can hit the mark, even in matters of art, will be a mystery, I fear, to the end of the world."

As the total destruction of the "Branch," however, interested them more than American art, as soon as the squall was over they returned to the goose, and asked her how she was going to shatter it to atoms.

She took up the handle of the demijohn, which was broken in the shape of a trowel, and thrusting her head

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through it she put it round her neck, and it made her look as though she had got her head in a poke. "This," she said, placing her hand on the handle of the demijohn, "means *fun* or a *joke*, you can see it is broken in the shape of a trowel, which gives it a point; when my quill gets unruly I shall write with this, and it will make the carcass shake, because I must write on top of it, to remind me of all I saw inside of it. But I must first take the handle of the demijohn home to my proper-gander, as a peace-offering; because it was the handle of the demijohn he was always quarrelling with me to get."

They all left the goose edified that she should already be premeditating how to bring about harmony between herself and her husband; they were all pleased, too, that she intended to obey St. Peter, and was going home to try to live with him.

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CHAPTER XXIV.

PART IV.

While the new recruits were hard at work in their efforts at self-conquest, one of the detached corps insisted upon setting out and making a raid on the infidels, when they happened to espy numerous unknown fleets approaching the Bark. Instantly every soldier was up in arms, for they beheld Buddha, Vishnu, and Islam, coming towards them. But they soon discovered that they had no need to be alarmed, as they returned the first charge from the Bark by making the sign of the cross.

St. Peter at once divined that this was another surprise, prepared for him by his crew and the forces enrolled on the floating pyramid. But before he could make arrangements to receive so many passengers on his Bark, the missionaries and members of the press had already boarded it, and were thanking the new recruits for the generous assistance they had rendered them during the campaign; but the new recruits hung their heads, declaring they had never fired a shot. The others, however, insisted the more that they were indebted to them for the successful issue of the war, and the guard boats, taking the advance, said to them:

"Indeed, you have done more than we; for the heathen,

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seeing that the State, in union with us, was as safe among her subjects as a child in its mother's arms, came running after us, wishing to know how it came to pass. We were not even obliged to cross over to them. Your example has done more to bring about this triumph than all our preaching, for in vain should we have gone into foreign parts to speak to the pagans of the inestimable blessings they would reap by adoring our God, if they had not first satisfied themselves that those who professed to believe in Him were happier than they. They also wanted to be assured that the reports were false that stated that those who came to teach them the doctrines of Christ were treated like miscreants at home."

They were here interrupted by some confusion caused by a little ship trying to make its way through the fleet, so as to reach the Bark. When it extricated itself from among the other ships, and came near enough to be recognized, the sight of it filled every heart with joy, every one supposing it was lost. It belonged to Lord Halsfelt, and had just returned from an exploring expedition. The ex-minister was standing on the quarter deck. He was no sooner recognized than the air was rent with congratulations for his safe arrival. Mr. Merrystein, (one of the ex-martyrs,) was the first to approach him and offer him his hand. He was going to escort him on board, when just as he was about to put his foot on the cross he heard the cock crow.

"Jehovah!" he exclaimed, letting go Mr. Merrystein's hand, "I thought he was dead, that St. Peter had got him back, and we were never to see or hear him again." Without giving Mr. Merrystein time to open his mouth, he turned around, and cried out to his friends,

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who had just brought him over, "Row me back! row me back!"

St. Peter, overhearing his lordship's remark, called out to him, "Indeed he is not dead, and is likely to last as long as the world stands, so don't stop for that." Saying which, he beckoned his crew to hold on to him, and try to prevent him going back.

When they got hold of him, thinking it would induce him to surrender, one of them said to him, "He is just as much yours as ours, and you have just as much right to him as any one else."

"Good heavens!" ejaculated Lord Halsfelt, "I would not possess a feather of him. I had quite enough of him when he was on top of the 'Branch.' I would sooner take my chance of going to heaven in the synagogue than try to get there in a ship with the cock aboard of it."

"Synagogue!" exclaimed a Jesuit, "why, that has gone under. When we got back the cock it drew all the Israelites over."

At those words Lord Halsfelt put his hand to his head, as if he had been stunned by a clap of thunder, while St. Peter cried out to him:

"My lord, there are more souls lost by prejudice than can be numbered. I know it is a dark shoal to pass over. All you need is light, and then you will see that the cock, instead of being a curse, is a great blessing to mankind, for he helps to keep CONSCIENCE awake, and our senses from getting blunt."

Lord Halsfelt, hearing St. Peter praising the cock, raised his hands in blank astonishment, as he heaved a deep sigh, and whispered to a comrade, "The State has

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converted St. Peter too. I had better have remained at the north pole."

St. Peter, approaching Lord Halsfelt, took him gently by the hand, and said, "My dear friend, the only difficulty was, that they did not keep him in his place. They made him general, and he was only intended for a common soldier. When he is in his right place he is not to be condemned or despised; on the contrary, he is entitled to a great deal of respect."

"I know he is entitled to respect," interrupted Lord Halsfelt, "for his powers of endurance. Did he not survive the efforts of five doctors, who tried to cure him?"

That was one of the mysteries in the cock's life that St. Peter had not yet learned. He made no reply, but was evidently deeply impressed.

The State meanwhile was standing near the mast, with PEACE and JOY. Lord Halsfelt no sooner beheld her again than he was captivated by her dazzling beauty. Never had she appeared to him so lovely, radiant alike in grace and majesty. He had always been devoted to her, and did not leave her until calumny drove him from her. As he gazed upon her he was seized with an irrepressible impulse to go and pay her such homage, and render her such service, as would prove to her beyond a doubt his sincerity and loyalty. But in order to do so he knew that he must join the Bark, otherwise an impassable gulf would roll between them. He had but one objection to join it, and that was his hatred of the cock, for he now believed in everything else St. Peter taught. "Alas!" thought he, "I can never swallow that." And turning to St. Peter and his crew, who were urging him to step over that difficulty, he said, "How can you insist

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upon my believing he is good for anything, after all the trouble he made? Oh, no; carry me back. You all know that he has caused the ruin of—."

"Yes," interposed St. Peter, without giving him time to finish his words, "and he will be the cause of your losing your soul, too, if he prevents you joining my Bark; for you believe everything else I teach, and you know that in all matters pertaining to doctrine I am infallible, and therefore you must believe."

St. Peter no sooner uttered the word "infallible," than Lord Halsfelt saw that he was in conscience bound to believe whatever he said in matters pertaining to faith, whether he liked it or not; and his new-born nature instantly asserted itself, and his soul made an inward shriek to heaven for help, when the smoke of prejudice which surrounded him vanished like the wind, and he instantly made a leap,—in a second more he was at her Majesty's feet. "Thank God," said he, as he arose, by placing his hand on St. Peter's cross,* "for giving us this reliable staff, the symbol of your INFALLIBILITY and AUTHORITY, upon which we can always lean. It is not only for the future gain it will be to my soul that I now rejoice, but for the protection† it gives to the State, whom I love next to my God."

"It is true," answered St. Peter, "that the belief in my INFALLIBILITY, when I speak in matters pertaining to

* Bishops have crosiers, but the head of the Church has a cross instead of a crook. The crook is a symbol of authority *only*, whereas St. Peter's cross is the symbol of his authority and infallibility.

† It gives protection to the State, inasmuch as all those who respect the Pope's infallibility will be governed by his teachings and admonitions to respect legitimate authority.

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faith, is the axis of Christianity, the axletree of moral progress and civilization, and the keystone of liberty and loyalty. Without that firm belief your loyalty to the Church or the State is liable at any moment to crumble to atoms, like a dry and sunburnt clod under the spade that is dashed against it."

His lordship then knelt and kissed St. Peter's ring, the emblem of his spiritual POWER, by which act of deference he openly acknowledged the Pontiff's right to command in all matters pertaining to Christian doctrine.

St. Peter loved Lord Halsfelt, and so did the people, for in recalling his past services they remembered he had defied public opinion when the cock was all the rage, and in trying to catch him to gratify the people he had torn off his comb and pulled out his tail. They also recollected it was on account of one of his feathers that he had lost his position; and they resolved that everything he had lost on account of his opposition to him should be restored to him, and he was soon afterwards re-elected in Mr. Merrystein's place.

CHAPTER XXV.

St. Peter, after congratulating Lord Halsfelt upon his re-election, gave him two important decorations for those in authority; one was a brilliant star, the emblem of DIGNITY, that should be placed near the heart; the other was a beautiful ribbon, the symbol of HONOUR, to be worn across the breast. They are gifts of the Church, bestowed upon it by God; though many souls possess them as

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innate gifts of nature, and they display them in their actions, where they dazzle more than when they are merely used as decorations.

After Lord Halsfelt had thanked the Pontiff for these visible marks of his esteem for him, St. Peter asked him if he would like to see the world as it could be seen from the interior of his Bark, before he entered on his arduous duties as minister, and proposed that the State should accompany them.

Her Majesty was surprised to hear that there was such a spot, for she thought she had already explored every recess there.

St. Peter smiled when he heard her confess such a delusion. "Madam," said he, "you have only seen a very small portion of it, for its territories are boundless. The interior of my Bark extends throughout the entire universe. It takes in the sun that shines upon this earth as if it were a star. The portion of it that you have seen is the same as though you had stood in the centre of a broad expanse, and imagined that what you beheld around you comprised the world."

Upon hearing these words her Majesty and Lord Halsfelt begged St. Peter to lead them to the spot where they could behold the world by the divine light.

They had hardly expressed this desire, than they found themselves in the interior of the Bark, as if they had been taken there by no effort of their own, and St. Peter, pointing to a distant mountain, said: "We are obliged to climb that before we can see the world as it is in reality."

The State and her minister did not recoil from the effort it might cost them, but begged him to lead them to it, promising to follow him regardless of the sacrifice.

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The State then remembered that the first time she entered the interior of the Bark, the mountain had been rent in twain, and held apart by angels for her to pass through it, and she felt that God must then have had compassion on her weakness; but now He expected more of her since He had given her greater strength.

They had hardly reached the mountain's base, when the sun shone down upon them with scorching rays, for the celestial veil was held by angels stationed on different mountain peaks, that peered their lofty summits far below them. When they attempted to scale the rugged height, they were obliged to get down on their hands and knees, and creep in order to mount with safety, for when they stood erect and tried to advance a step, they were in constant danger of slipping back, and would have done so despite their efforts to keep their hold, had not the golden borders of the celestial veil, that was below them, been wafted towards them to give their feet a resting place.

Suddenly they came to an abrupt turn, and beheld before them the broad mouth of a cave, into which they were forced to enter, for it was surrounded on every side by insurmountable cliffs, that appeared to defy the efforts of man to scale.

They had scarcely entered the cave, when a cold tremor swept over her Majesty's frame; but instead of recoiling, they sped forward more rapidly until they found themselves enveloped in a deep gloom, and the air became so dense that they could scarcely breathe. The State and her minister slackened their steps, St. Peter instantly perceived it in the resounding cave, and halted until they were by his side again. Taking them by the hand, he led them through the darkness like children, bidding them

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the while not to be afraid, for they had the Master's word that He would never abandon those who put their trust in Him. That promise then became like a beacon in their hearts; yet all without was frigidly damp and dark, and the ground they trod was rough, yet not a murmur or a reproach was heard; nothing but the echoing of their steps, that resounded weirdly throughout the vaulted caverns, and they too, soon died away, for they suddenly found themselves face to face with a rough stony surface, cold and clammy to the touch, forming apparently the end of the cave. Her Majesty was about to recoil from it, and return, when St. Peter bade her stay.

"You cannot retrace your steps in the interior world," said he; "you must keep going ever forward, for one step backwards takes years of painful efforts to regain. Did you not observe that the instant we entered the cave an abyss opened behind us, and followed our steps, and that it is now beside us? But we have nothing to fear so long as we stand firm, and rely upon His word."

St. Peter then let go their hands and let them lean upon that which he leaned upon himself,—His Word. He had hardly left them when the wall before them began to shake, which jarred the earth on which they stood, and stretching forth their arms as if to seize St. Peter's hand again, they clenched nothing but the cold damp space, and he appeared to be far away, though they could hear his voice, which, every time it vibrated through the cave, renewed their strength, for it always ended thus, "Lean upon His word, it will never fail." His Word alone was now their only anchor and stay, and they felt secure, and stood erect, like heroes bidding defiance to doubt, which was assailing them on every side without being able to

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wound them, for by an act of their WILL they wrapped the sails of FAITH and HOPE about their souls, which rendered them invulnerable to hell's insidious blows.

How long they stood there they never knew. Such moments cannot be counted by the hand of time. Suffering finds relief in action, but when we are forced to stand and wait before an impenetrable wall, surrounded by thick darkness, with the earth trembling beneath our feet, without being able to retrace our steps on account of a bottomless abyss that is stretched behind us, and are goaded backwards by a hell-born foe that seems to envy God the prize of a trusting soul; such moments TIME, with his cold and unrelenting fingers, cannot count, for he passes by too swiftly: such moments drag behind, and appear to those who have lived them like endless years.

Yet, despite the harrowing torture of their position, they felt amidst it all a secret joy that they should no longer be the sport of the caprices of fortune or of the passions of mankind. They were no sooner perfectly resigned than a feeble light began to glimmer athwart the wall, which soon became so clear that they could discern the objects around them, and what a short while before appeared to them so appalling, now made them smile, for behind them lay a mossy lawn studded with pearls, as though the gulf had been silently filled up while they were waiting there, and the interior of the cave appeared sparkling like a fairy's realm; for they could see angels' faces peeping out here and there, smiling as if they had hollowed out the earth behind them just to try them, and were now seeking to hide, as if ashamed to show themselves.

As the light came peering brighter and brighter through the wall, the wall itself, under the hallowed influence of

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that light, began to dissolve until it became as transparent as a piece of gauze, so that St. Peter could raise it gently with his hand. They had hardly passed beyond it than they found themselves standing on board St. Peter's ship of state, which was surrounded by the ocean's waves, and the cave through which they had been obliged to pass in order to reach it sank silently, as if to repose in the ocean's bosom.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The mast of St. Peter's ship of state was entirely concealed by a most loathsome drapery, which licence had so ingeniously wound around it that it had defied the efforts which had been made for centuries to remove it. The hull of the ship appeared like a desolated island cliff resting on a base, in the shape of an eagle that was standing with outstretched wings on an island embedded in the heart of the sea. Around it lay a beneficent harbour, formed by the eagle's outspread wings, as if its breast was intended to serve as a covert from the heat of the day, or a protection from the winds or the surging waves. There were as many ships of state sailing around it as there were realms throughout the world, and as they glided by it the crews would wag their heads, and deride St. Peter for always staying at anchor and never going ahead.

These different ships of state were leaky crafts, surrounded by sharks, whose motto was "grab." Their crews, instead of stopping up the leaks which the sharks

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had made, appeared to be widening them with their own hands, for they were knocking out planks from the bottoms of their ships, while their most stalwart men were busily engaged hewing down the masts. Whenever they came near enough to St. Peter's ship to touch it they would make a quick turn and stave up against it, as if they were doing it expressly to smash their prows, for by such manœuvres many of their prows were split.

"Well," exclaimed the State, when she saw what they were up to, "I never beheld such folly."

"It is what I have been witnessing for centuries," said St. Peter. "Whenever a State contemns the honour due to the Mother of God, she is hewing down her own mast, for the mast of every ship of state is the Blessed Virgin; and when the State tries to crush out Catholic education, she is knocking out the planks from the bottom of her ship; and when a State opposes my bulls and encyclicals, she is smashing her prow. You can see that my ship of state lies in the centre of the sea, and is intended for a haven for the other ships of state. But watch their manœuvres."

"Yes," observed Lord Halsfelt, "they all appear leagued together trying to move it."

"Hoping," rejoined St. Peter, "to be able to demolish it, thinking they will thus be able to get rid of me, for many of them consider my Bark and ship of state to be one and the same thing. They might destroy my ship of state, but destroy my Bark they cannot, for it not only extends throughout this world, but it sustains the whole universe. They can impede its course and lessen its usefulness by constantly attacking it, and refusing the protection it offers them. But I do not despair of soon being

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able to convince them of their folly, since your Majesty has had the courage to set the example, for great is the force of example from a noble and illustrious nation."

While St. Peter was speaking a magnificent ship appeared on the horizon. As it advanced all the other ships made way and looked up to it with as much respect as if she were the acknowledged ruler of the world. The air was so clear that her mast could be seen for leagues away. As she cut the water the very waves burst forth into songs of glee, for her whole body breathed triumph and peace, because her mast was OUR LADY OF VICTORIES.

As this magnificent ship approached, and the State beheld her own ensigns waving over it, she could see that it was her own realm, and she threw upon St. Peter a look of heartfelt gratitude, for she knew that it was to her union with him she owed all this peace, prosperity, and security.

"Alas!" she said, "I fear I shall represent our Lady of Victories most unworthily."

"I am often filled with confusion," replied St. Peter, "that our Lord should find so unworthy a representative in me, but that does not discourage me, for I know I am but human, and all He requires of me is that I should lean on Him and rely upon His word. It is only when we doubt and waver that we begin to fail."

The crafts in the meantime were looking with wonder upon this mighty ship of state, as they parleyed with each other, trying to discover to what it was she owed her present prosperity, security, and peace.

"I thought," said one, "that she was going under, for were we not told she was sinking, and had been obliged to go over to St. Peter in order to keep above water?"

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"But she sails amongst us now," cried out a craftsman, "with an air that bids us beware, for she is secure, but that none of us are."

"I wonder where her throne is? I see no guard over there."

As this magnificent ship of state was about to pass them the others tried to keep pace with it, while the crew of one of them called out to some children who were playing at the prow, "Tell us," they cried, "where her Majesty sits."

A little girl put her hand on her heart, and replied, "Here, sir."

They supposed by that answer the children did not understand what they meant, and they called out to them again: "We want to know where her Majesty's throne is?"

"I told you," answered the child, as she pointed to her breast.

This time they shouted back, "Do you know over there what we are talking to you about?"

"Yes," retorted several infantine voices; "you want to know where her Majesty's throne is."

"And I showed you," spoke up a little girl above the rest. "Her Majesty's throne is in the hearts of the people; it is in them she reposes."

At these words the other crafts were struck with astonishment as they one and all burst forth: "Those children have been well brought up. They have drawn loyalty from their mothers' breasts!" And they all wondered how in these days it could have been done.

Her Majesty the State was deeply moved by this little episode. The crafts soon began hovering around her ship,

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and asking more questions in a moment than could be answered in an age. It finally ended in their turning round and steering towards St. Peter's ship with a little more respect than they had been wont to do, for instead of splitting their prows against it, they gave him a military salute, and begged him to send over to them as many teachers as he could spare, for they needed them to bring up their children.

St. Peter, without making any allusion to the past, gave a signal that was carried from one quarter to the other of his Bark. Shortly afterwards, teachers were seen boarding the crafts, who were bound by CONSCIENCE and held by the FEAR OF THE LORD.

Not long afterwards, a visible change could be seen in the crafts. The first thing their crews did was to stop tearing up the planks in the bottoms of their ships, and to cease chopping down their masts, while they pelted off the sharks with red-hot bricks.

Gradually in each ship a new mast could be seen, that differed from the other in form and beauty. In the centre of one appeared a Mystical Rose, on another a House of Gold, and on another a Tower of Ivory. Every ship had its favourite mast, and though none of them appeared like the other, yet they all resembled each other in strength; for they were all a type of the Virgin Queen and Mother.*

While this great work was going forward so rapidly, the ships for a while cast anchor; but when they began ploughing the waves again, they all moved in harmony, and their swelling sails, instead of breathing discord and threatening destruction, looked as though they had been

* "The Queen stood on thy right hand in gilded clothing: surrounded with variety."—*Psalm* xliv. 10.

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changed into waving harps, through which the winds were whistling merrily airs of victory, while their cords vibrating, gave forth a mysterious melody, as if they were touched by the fingers of the Almighty.

As her Majesty gazed upon the scene, it appeared to her more like a world of enchantment, than like a reality.

Lord Halsfelt proposed that she should go over to her ship, as her subjects were anxiously waiting her presence; but her Majesty seemed loathe to comply with her minister's wishes in that respect.

"My people do not need my presence," she said, "for the Mother of God is watching over them."

"Nevertheless," rejoined St. Peter, "your subjects require a visible head. You might as well say, that as Christ is the Mast of my Bark, He does not require me either; but it is in the Divine plan to have a visible head, for the people to look up to as their ruler: it is the first condition of order."

"How can I reach my ship?" said the State; "you see that from where I am now it appears to be far away."

"Your Majesty must walk to it, then, over the waves: not as I did once; but then IT WAS NOT YET CONSUMMATED, and I had not the experience of eighteen centuries to strengthen my faith. There are mysteries about the triangular rock on which my Bark stands, which are difficult for some minds to comprehend; one of them is, that although the rock is invisible, yet it can always be found in every sea, and on any ground, by those who seek it for the purpose of standing upon it."

Her Majesty no longer hesitated, but from where she then stood on St. Peter's ship of state, it was like standing on the brink of a lofty cliff, and it was the first step she

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dreaded most, for it appeared to her as though the very attempt to walk on the water from it would put an end to her existence; the first step seemed like walking off a precipice. But she no sooner resolved to rest upon His WORD, than the waves instantly arose to a level with the spot on which she stood, and as she advanced with her minister hand in hand, every step she took forward was like walking on dry land.

When her subjects saw her coming towards them walking on the water, their impatience to meet her was so great that they became insensible of danger. They merely felt that what her Majesty had the courage to do, they need not fear to do either, so they sprang fearlessly into the water, and ran rapidly over the waves until they reached her, when they followed joyfully after her, vying with each other in paying her royal homage.

These outbursts of loyalty no longer frightened her, for she knew the principles which inspired and regulated them. She no sooner gained her ship again, than she felt as secure among her subjects as a mother surrounded by a band of devoted children.

In the midst of their rejoicings, her Majesty and Lord Halsfelt cast a grateful look towards the island cliff, and beheld St. Peter standing there alone, his hoary locks waving in the wind.

The other ships of state chanced to see him too, and a generous impulse seemed to move them all as they steered their ships towards him, as eaglets would fly towards a stricken parent bird; not for shelter or protection, but to nestle round it, to warm and soothe it. But when they were near enough to St. Peter to scan his face he appeared to be the happiest of men, for a smile shone in

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every feature. Still there was something wanting to complete their joy.

"Holy Father," they said, addressing St. Peter, "your ship of state looks so dilapidated and forlorn, that it mars our pleasure, for it makes you appear in the distance forsaken and disowned."

"It is not my fault," St. Peter answered. "It requires all my funds to run my Bark. I cannot burden my people with taxes in order to adorn my ship of state. You know they have not the resources of obtaining wealth you have."

"But you know, holy Father, that since we are in communion with you, your ship of state belongs as much to us as it does to those who inhabit it; let us rig it up for you to suit ourselves!"

"I can permit you to do that; it is only my Bark that I cannot allow you to interfere with in any way. I know the eagle-shaped base on which my ship of state rests has been treated so badly that it now appears more like a vulture than anything else. It would please me much if you would but restore its eagle-like shape, because I wish you all to be convinced that my ship of state is raised and supported by LOYALTY, and not by extortion or force."

They all set immediately to work to repair the old ship, but they soon found out that it could not be rigged up like their own, and that it was never intended to be shifting about to increase its commerce, in order to abound in wealth, for its anchor appeared to have been caught and chained to the very pillars of the universe, which defied all their efforts to weigh it, and the eagle-like base appeared to have clenched the pillar to which it was fastened.

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They soon got discouraged at the resistance it made, and going to St. Peter, began to complain of their inability to move it.

"Move my ship of state!" St. Peter exclaimed, after he had listened to their murmuring; "why, it should never be moved at all. My ship of state is a stationary school ship, but my Bark is a man-of-war."

"Would it injure your Bark, holy Father," some of them asked, "if your ship of state was moved?"

"It would only impede its course for a while, and injure the good it might do, so I hope you will not try to adapt your ideas of progress and prosperity to my ship of state, for it never was intended to be like yours. It should be like a fertile island in the heart of the sea, known as the seat of learning and piety, where art and genius thrive, and a quiet resort where the weary soul can hie to find repose in an august calm."

St. Peter no sooner pronounced those words than they acknowledged their folly in bygone days, when they used to sneer at the old ship of state that belonged to the Church, for its snail-like pace. But they did not understand it then, and they now went zealously to work to try to make amends for the past. They took a genuine delight in adorning the State that belonged to the Church, for they knew that so long as they were in union with the Church it belonged to them.

Everybody was so busily engaged, no one perceived that the goose too had entered heartily into the work, and had succeeded in cutting away the drapery which licence had wrapped round the mast. Neither were the people on the school ship idle, for they wished to give the others a grateful surprise, in return for making their ship appear

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like the new Jerusalem launched upon a mammoth eagle in the heart of the sea.

One evening, as the other ships of state lay at anchor, reposing in peace, they were awakened by sounds of merriment that proceeded from the school ship. Instantly every man, woman, and child arose and went up on deck. They knew that rejoicing on the school ship foreboded something good for them, and they stood there like children impatiently waiting their share. They had not long to wait. As the incense up to heaven in every quarter of the school ship was scattered, they saw the knights of Mary marching triumphantly under a banner on which the image of the Madonna could be distinctly seen in the distance.

These troops gave no umbrage to the other ships of state, for each of them had sent a cohort composed of their own crew, known as the army of their respective ships. They had, besides, contributed the bravest of their sons to Italy, gorgeously equipped as soldiers of the cross, to give dignity to St. Peter's throne, and to show that honour and devotion they felt was due to the Mother of God.

As shouts of praise and rejoicing, mingled with strains of martial music, burst forth from the ranks of the knights of Mary, the school ship was suddenly surrounded by a mysterious light, as if the star of genius had risen again, and was shining brightly over Italy, for its meteoric rays were seen darting through the air. This was no mere ephemeral pyrotechnic display, for the rays of light when separated branched off into graceful curves, which formed cornucopias that emptied their treasures in the different ships of state, into which they poured the fruits of genius, poetry, and song. Art, that had so long been dozing,

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made a sudden leap into perfection again. These fruits of genius were most sweet and grateful to the taste of the other ships of state, for they were not the products of Italian minds alone, for many who had come from colder climes had caught in Italy the sacred flame, which ever sported in that sunny land when its people were not enslaved, and they too had contributed their part.

Before the world could fully appreciate all the benefits the school ship had showered upon it, every one's attention was drawn to its mast, which was now thoroughly divested of the loathsome covering of ignorance and prejudice with which licence had so long concealed it. They now beheld the Queen of Heaven* with the Infant Saviour, who was holding out His right hand in the act of blessing them, while in His left He held the book containing the divine law, when lo, on the Virgin Queen's shoulder shone the star of genius, with a brightness and a fire caught from the Divine Infant in her arms. Resting on her forehead was the Grecian cross; it sparkled on her brow like the cross of Savoy when the angels bore it home, and the light that was revealed from her figure, which for centuries had been concealed, shed its beneficent rays over the sea, and lighted up the masts of the other ships of state, which seemed to appropriate its beams. From them these beams were reflected on to the people, and penetrated their hearts, and warmed them so that they began throbbing with delight, whilst they impetuously asked each other the name of that sacred light. It was unlike any other they had ever seen or felt before they were united with the Holy See. They began steering closer to the school ship, to learn what the name of that light

* This Madonna is venerated in St. Maria Maggiore.

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might be, when they beheld the knights of Mary presenting arms on bended knee, while the whole sea resounded with "Hail! Hail! all hail to our Mother and Queen! Hail to the light of true Liberty!" that name which licence had defamed, and in the name of which so many crimes had been committed, was redeemed again. It was the name of that light that shone from the Blessed Virgin and her Son, the mast of St. Peter's ship of state. The light of liberty now illuminated the world.

CHAPTER XXVII.

The world now appeared to be enjoying the inestimable blessings springing from the union of the Church with the States. St. Peter was revered with that honour which is due to him as the Vicar of Christ, and loyalty to the State had taken a chivalrous tone, for she was now honoured with all that deference and love which every soul felt was due to one who represented on earth the Queen of Heaven. Men began to feel in this tide of prosperity that they were proof against temptation. But the moment had come when their devotion to the Church and their loyalty to the State was to be tested.

All the States had generously contributed towards raising a magnificent statue to St. Peter. The design was to be submitted for approval to a very select committee which the different States had delegated to represent them for that purpose.

Everything in the committee was going on smoothly and amicably until one day, when they were busily en-

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gaged examining, comparing, and admiring the numerous designs laid before them, they chanced to come across a plan with the cock drawn at St. Peter's feet. Instantly the committee separated and appeared irreconcilable; some of them on the spot declared they would never approve any design if the cock was there, for the cock did not belong to the Church any more than he did to the State, and it would be giving the Church a supremacy over the State which it had not presumed to arrogate to itself.

Others as vehemently declared that they would not approve any design if the cock were not there, and some swore that he should not only be there, but that he should be placed above St. Peter's chair; which could be easily arranged if they raised a statue to him, representing him seated on a throne under a dais, and the cock should cap the dais.

The dissension did not confine itself to the committee in which it arose; for their proceedings were no sooner heralded over both hemispheres, than in nearly every family a dispute arose, which bred such bitter hate, that it was fast developing a revolution in all the states.

Those who preferred peace to war, blamed the competitor who had drawn the design, for having put the cock in at all; but no one knew to whom it belonged, as it bore no signature, which showed that it had been drawn by some designing mind to provoke a broil.

While the dissension was waxing warmer and warmer, an old statue of St. Peter was discovered to have been mutilated. The foot was broken off, and a cock, with a sharp nail driven through his claw, was fastened on top of St. Peter's head.

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The dissension subsided for a moment, for every one paused to conjecture who the aggressors were, trying to disturb the peace, and destroy the happy relations that existed between the Church, the state, and the people.

The statue was no sooner repaired than another outrage was committed upon it, more audacious than the first. The head this time was gone, and a cock that had been plucked alive, was hanging to one of St. Peter's feet, that projected just far enough beyond the pedestal to serve as a beam.

This was too much for poor human nature to bear: no one could pass it without grinding his teeth, and shaking his fists in the air.

St. Peter sent the goose to watch the statue, because she was small and could be easily concealed: she had hardly got into the shadow of a niche when her quill began shaking with *delirium tremens*. She pinched it to keep it still, for she saw mysterious looking people moving towards her.

A mason appeared first, with a brick in his hat, and an odd looking fellow was following him with a stick, whilst a knight of Pythias pushed forward fearlessly, and placed himself before the statue, when he put his thumb to his nose, and spreading his fingers out, made a kind of cabalistic sign. This gallant knight was followed by a Chief Magnificent Reverend Druid Priest, who was whirling the lid of a coffin, as the Italians do the tambourine, and every time he gave it a thump, he tossed up his heels. Then came a Right Worshipful Grand Master, carrying a cock which he had plucked and pierced with a shepherd's crook.

These brave leaders were steadily followed by their

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clans, who were just on the point of assaulting the statue, when the goose made a spring and showed herself. Her presence caused a general panic; and they instantly fell back pell-mell on to each other, nearly frightened to death, for her quill at the sight of them began shaking again, and in the pale moonlight then shining upon her she looked like a ghost with a little witch dancing beside her.

When they saw the handle of the demijohn around her neck, they thought it must be a trowel that had come from the land of spirits; and they began making her the grand hailing sign, believing she must have once been a mason, or an odd-fellow. They needed no greater sign than the movements of her companion, which was shaking like many of their brothers did just before they died.

The goose did not return the sign, she merely pointed to her quill, and her silent reproach as much as said: "Behold one of the penalties of going through your ceremonies! But you shall pay for it yet! you shall pay for it yet!"

They all appeared to comprehend the silent threat, for it had the same effect upon them as the charge of a reserve corps in the heat of a battle.

They became so confused that in seizing hold of each other they did not know what they were about, and they got all the grips mixed up, which frightened them so much, that in their alarm they let the terrible secret out, which the goose, who was close at their heels, picked up.

They no sooner discovered what a dreadful thing they had done, than they rushed frantically home to bid their wives and children farewell for ever, because they knew that on the morrow they would be kidnapped and mur-

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dered; for they had agreed by a solemn oath, and had given bail besides, that they would submit to this efficacious punishment if they should ever disclose *the awful secret*. And still they were not resigned!

When the goose's report was heralded through the states, the people flew to St. Peter, and appeared deeply humiliated that they should have let themselves be caught and made the sport of the secret societies again.

They brought the designs with them, and gave them to St. Peter, and told him to choose the one that he preferred. St. Peter told them that in a question of that sort he was not infallible, and they would not be bound by conscience to abide by his decision; but as they had requested him to choose the design for them, he did so willingly, hoping his choice would settle the difficulty. He then glanced over the plans, and singled out the one over which the quarrel began.

Every one expected he was going to destroy it before their eyes; but no, he had chosen it from amongst the rest, because it was the design that pleased him most, and he quickly told them so.

He was instantly reminded that it was the very one which the secret societies had drawn, and thrown among them for an apple of discord.

"No matter if they did," replied St. Peter, "let them throw as many as they like, it is your duty to be on watch and not pick them up. Besides, no matter what the enemy does to injure us, we must always be just. I have chosen this design from among the rest, because it pleases me most, and for the reason that I find it the best."

"But," they all cried out at once, "don't you see, holy Father, that the cock is there?"

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"Precisely!" answered St. Peter, "and that is the reason I like it so much, for in Christian art the cock is a symbol of the resurrection, and as a symbol I would like to see him always beside me. The cock is associated with the saddest hours of my life, and it is but right that when he reminds me of my fall, he should also remind me of the glorious promise made to those who repent. And when I look upon him, let me look down, for I wish to become meek and humble; therefore do not place him over my head, where I should be obliged to look up in order to see him, for the sun might dazzle my eyes and I might become presumptious again, so let him always be placed at my feet, where my eyes can rest upon him. I am human like yourselves, and am obliged to keep a continual watch over myself. I trust, therefore, that you will let him remain at my feet, to remind me of my weakness, and prevent me falling again."

At these words a generous impulse took possession of their souls, and they were stung with remorse at their cruelty in depriving their Pontiff of his favourite symbol.

"St. Peter," they one and all cried out, "the cock shall be yours, and we will place him hereafter wherever it suits you, and we ask your forgiveness for having so long disputed your right to him."

When St. Peter heard these words the tears gushed to his eyes, for he knew then the floodgates of lawlessness had subsided, that the Church had found dry land on which to rest, and that the world was saved; for those words proved to him that the people *really loved* him, and were willing to make any sacrifice for him. He could only compare the great happiness which now flooded his soul to the depth of his sorrow when he recalled his

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Master's words after he had heard the cock crow, and a childish impulse seized him which he found it impossible to restrain, and gazing on the drawing, he kissed it again and again. It was the image of the cock drawn at his feet that his venerable lips touched, for he loved him. Yes, he loved him because our Lord had spoken of him just before His death, and thus he felt that he had a right to him as a symbol, because his attachment for him had its birth in the Saviour's love. In that moment of joy he forgot all the annoyance and sorrow the cock had ever caused him; for a perverse creature he was, and had always been, and would ever be. There was nothing to love about him, still he loved him in spite of his faults, feeling towards him as we should feel towards each other, because we ought not to ask more from one another than we have to give. Therefore St. Peter did not dislike the cock because he had not one good quality about him; he knew God had not lent him a talent, and therefore would expect nothing from him; but St. Peter loved him, despicable as he was, because he had been the means of helping him to increase the talents God had given him; and now he loved him more than ever, because a mere image of him had been the means of proving to him that his children really loved him.

While St. Peter was thus reflecting, the people began reasoning among themselves: "*If St. Peter loves the cock so much, merely because our Lord spoke of him just before His death, how much more must St. Peter love us, since our Lord died for us?*" And their hearts were moved at the very thought, for they never before realized how much St. Peter loved them. St. Peter knew that an angel must have whispered to them, for he saw their souls were

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on fire with an unquenchable zeal to serve him, and he felt that the whole truth must have entered their souls at last, for he could see they were now convinced how dear they had always been to him, and he praised God for the blessing He had just bestowed upon them, for it had thoroughly united them with him. It was one of the happiest days he had ever known, and he felt for a moment that the sun of his joy could never set. But, alas! such bliss was never intended for this world, and when it is given it often appears as if it were sent to console us in anticipation of heavier blows about to descend upon our heads.

He knew that so long as his children remained in close union with himself, he and they had nothing to fear from their enemies, the secret societies, and turning leisurely away, intending to take a rest, he happened to cast his eyes over the sea, when what should he behold coming rapidly towards him but some men who had once been known as the *violent Catholic press*. His heart instantly sank within him, as he fell upon his knees and raised his hands supplicatingly. "God has delivered me from my foes," he cried; "oh, that He had delivered me from my *friends!*" St. Peter was frightened; he was afraid they were coming back to defend him again. Seeing the goose close at their heels, he asked her if she could tell why they had come back.

"Yes, holy Father," the goose replied, "I know very well. There was a quarrel this morning in hell, and your violent friends took sides with the devils, but the devils, instead of thanking them for it, picked up their remains, and putting them together, said to them, as they kicked them out of their way, 'St. Peter's Bark may be strong

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enough to stand such a press, but hell is not: it would make it for us down here a little too hot.'"

The violents passed St. Peter, however, without even a salute, for they no sooner spied the goose than they all started for her, declaring that the handle of the demijohn she wore around her neck belonged to them. But the goose declared they would have to kill her before they could have it, for she was bound to keep it to make her husband happy. Everybody then began mourning for the goose; they feared they would never see her alive again, and they asked St. Peter what means could be devised to try and save her.

"There is no fear of their hurting her," said St. Peter, "so long as they attack her, and are trying to kill her; but if I saw them defending her I should do my utmost to rescue her, for her life would then be in danger."

While the goose and the violents were in the thickest of the fight, the floating pyramid, or moderate Catholic press, hove in sight. The goose got behind it, and stopped to take a peep at that hydrophobic press which was then threatening the commanders of the pyramid with instant death, unless they delivered the goose over to them. When she compared the two together, the violents appeared beside the moderates like so many bed wrenches and clothes pins trying to stand up and take an impregnable fortress.

The managers of the pyramid had hardly glanced at their assailants before they raised their hands and made the same sign to them that the knights of Pythias made on that memorable night to St. Peter's statue. They thought the best way to kill them was with contempt: but they soon discovered that they were so far beneath it

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that it had not the slightest effect upon them. But wishing to get rid of them, they threw a half-penny into the sea, when the violents instantly turned on their heels and went fishing for it. They no sooner found it than they kicked up such a row over it, because each of them was determined to have it, that St. Peter called out to them and told them to be still, for they had all heard enough. After this rebuke they stood up before the world and tried to defend themselves. *That was the last of them;* it killed them so effectually that they never rose again.

When the goose saw that they were dead she came out from behind the floating pyramid, with the handle of the demijohn still round her neck. She was no sooner on the school ship again than the people came around her, hoping to get out of her the secret she had picked up when the masons let it drop. They coaxed her and implored her to tell it to them, but in vain, for all they could get out of her was, "Thereby hangs a tale! thereby hangs a tail!" St. Peter alone comprehended the purport of her words; he also knew it was the disclosing of that secret which was surrounded with so much mystery, which was to enlighten the world, and that when it was revealed he could ride in triumph through the new Jerusalem, and the people would spread their garments underneath him on the way, and cry out for joy, "Blessed is the king who cometh in the name of the Lord." St. Peter was getting impatient for that day to come, and he asked the goose with an anxious mien:

"When, my child, when will you write it out, so the whole world may be relieved?"

"It will be the sequel to 'St. Peter and the Cock,'" replied the goose, "and I will publish it, holy Father,

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after I have presented a marble statue of our Lady of Victories to the new Oratory in London."

"I hope, child, you will do it soon."

"Ah, but getting it, holy Father, does not depend on me alone, because I am poor, and do not possess so much as an ear of corn, nor a shingle to shelter my head, and am obliged to sit in a gutter, and write on the curbstone out in the wet."

"My crew will give you some chaff to eat, and the loan of a board to cover your head, while you are writing the book; of that I am sure."

"Alas, no, holy Father; for since I wrote my life your crew have done nothing but pelt me with stones, and rub my face in the mud."

"They do it to try you, child, and to make you tough. It is just such treatment as you require, and you should pray that they may keep it up, for your soul should be like an india-rubber ball, the harder you are thrown down, the higher you should go up."

The goose was obliged to confess it had done her good, and she said she was going to try to persevere, and trust to Providence for shelter and food. Still, she added, "I have not the heart to set to work until I have presented a statue to the Oratory in Brompton first."

"But, my child," replied St. Peter, "such a statue as they require would cost a thousand pounds, for they would expect the Infant Jesus and His Mother to be adorned with jewelled crowns, and where is the money coming from?"

"I wish to get it by subscription, holy Father."

"Ah, I see," said St. Peter, "you wish me to permit my children to give you the money to buy it with, and let

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you have the pleasure and merit of presenting it to the new church yourself. I must know more about you before I can allow my children to make you such a present. I will inquire and hear what people have to say concerning you."

"I beg you will not, holy Father," exclaimed the goose, apparently frightened, "for you might be tempted to try me again, and tell me to go back *post haste* to my *proper gander*, and not think of presenting the statue; for since I wrote my life, built a church, and undertook to found a work, why, even the saints abuse me."

"Ah," replied St. Peter, thoughtfully, as if he had suddenly received a light, "that is usually the way whenever God wishes to have a work founded for His glory; the devil sets up all the holy souls against the one who undertakes it: he imagines it is the easiest way of putting a stop to it. I will hear what my people have to say, and if I find the holy souls *very bitter* towards you, I shall know what to attribute it to, and it will give me a little faith that God may have called you to do His work."

The first one he spoke to was a cardinal, one of the holiest men on earth, the very one whose wig the goose had taken away. The goose trembled when she heard St. Peter ask him what he thought of her. At the very mention of her name the cardinal made a grimace and quickly answered, "I believe she was created to create more trouble than the rooster."

St. Peter did not know what his Eminence meant to compare her with, but he could divine by the expression of his face that he was against her.

He then went to a pious old lady who attended three Masses every day.

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"Ah," she exclaimed, rolling up her eyes, "that goose is an imp of the old boy. See what her mother was, and what she was herself! Her place is in the house of the Good Shepherd, where she should be made to wash the pots and scour the knives, instead of parading herself over the old and new world as an orthodox Catholic writer. Why, she is trying to set herself up as a rival to Cardinal Newman! But we will put her down yet. We'll dip her in a pot of boiling pitch, and add a few feathers to it. As she pretends to have been burnt down, robbed, and stripped, we will give her a coop and a suit of clothes that will fit her yet, and we'll—."

St. Peter did not wait to hear her through, but passed on to a saintly prior, who was famed for his perspicacity, and asked him to give his opinion of the goose.

"Ah," holy Father," he answered, rubbing his hands and smacking his lips, as if he relished the fix she was in, "she is caught at last. She has married a man who believes himself a saint. 'Tis true he goes to confession and Holy Communion two or three times a week; but he mortifies himself by torturing his wife, hoping to make a martyr of her, believing he will gain for himself an immortal crown if he could send a woman straight to heaven. But women are loath to be driven, even to heaven, and when they get husbands who try to drive them at lightning speed, they usually turn and take an opposite course, and plunge headlong into hell, where the goose will doubtless end."

"Nevertheless," interposed a Jesuit, "we feel it is our duty to do all that we can to persuade her to live with him."

"Yes," answered a holy Dominican, "for you Jesuits

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know as well as our fathers that heaven could only be heaven without her."

St. Peter inquired no further, but beckoning the goose to come to him, he smiled most graciously upon her when he said to her, "My child, you shall have the statue, you shall have the statue, for it looks *very much* as if God had called you to do something for His glory."

She then picked up her tools, and said she was going home. But every one was surprised at the direction she took, for instead of going towards America, they saw her walking towards China.

"This way, this way," some of them cried out; "you will never reach your home unless you turn round. America lies this way."

"That is all you know over here about America," replied the goose. "America lies both ways."

Many of them considered the goose's words a libel on her country.

"Halloa," they shouted out, "how dare you call your country such a liar?"

"Who called their country a liar?" retorted the goose. "You are always twisting my words. You must want them to murder me when I get home. But I do insist that America lies both ways, and if I choose to return to my husband by the way of the Pacific instead of the Atlantic, it is because I wish to prolong the happy anticipation of meeting him again."

When the goose had gone, St. Peter's children came hovering around him and begged him to give them a motto for their ships of state, one that would be appropriate for them all, and they wished to have it wrought like the one the Israelites had brought when they joined

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his Bark. They wished it to be terse and short, so that it could be inscribed in large letters on their banners and read from afar.

"My dear children," said St. Peter, "you all know I am averse to anything new, and the motto I choose is the words that I wrote in my epistle centuries ago: 'FEAR GOD, HONOUR THE KING.'"

CHAPTER XXVIII.

This motto pleased the people so much, that they there and then decided unanimously to hold a high festival in honour of St. Peter, and to escort him in triumphal procession through the streets as a conqueror, who by his wisdom, prudence, and patience, had, unaided, drawn the whole world to his feet. Several months were taken up in preparing for the celebration, which they were determined should surpass in splendour and heartiness all the triumphs decreed to the pagan conquerors in olden times.

When at length the happy day dawned, his followers brought him, in the early morning, a snow-white charger, richly caparisoned with gold and gems, for him to mount.

St. Peter was greatly pleased when he saw the beautiful horse, because he felt that all this munificence bespoke the sincere devotion of his children, not only to his person, but much more to his high office, for which they desired to show their reverence by every means in their power.

St. Peter, however, did not mount the horse, but

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glancing quickly round him, as quickly withdrew. His children became anxious when they saw him go away, imagining, from the expression of sorrow on his face, that he was perhaps dissatisfied with their preparations.

"What is wanting, holy Father?" they exclaimed; "tell us, and whatever it be, we will procure it."

"My dear children," St. Peter replied, as the tears ran down his cheeks, "how could you think me capable of riding a conqueror in triumph through the streets, when your representative here is obliged to walk on foot by the side of my horse?"

"We wish it to be so, holy Father," they said. "We want to make the greatest distinction between you and ourselves, for we feel that the honour we show you is but the expression of our love for God."

"There is nothing wanting in that respect to make my triumph perfect," answered St. Peter; "but the Head of the Church can never rejoice so long as its Body is still in grief. To make my triumph complete, I must see the one who represents you borne in triumph by my side. I will, however, since you so much wish it, make the sacrifice and mount the horse, all the more readily that by so doing I shall be fulfilling the prophecy uttered long ago by Isaiah, when he foretold the future prosperity of Christ's kingdom on earth, a prophecy which you, too, are fulfilling, by paying me royal honours. Nevertheless, there is something wanting to its perfect fulfilment, and I have just told you what that is."

Then they understood that St. Peter was more mindful of their happiness than they were themselves, and far more than he was of his own; but they were greatly disconcerted, for they knew that the one who represented

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them would require a tractable beast to ride upon, and they did not know where to find one.

After passing several hours in vain endeavours to find an animal of the kind, they asked St. Peter if he could tell them, as our Lord told His disciples, where to go and get one.

"Ah!" replied St. Peter, "I can tell you where the one you ought to have is hidden away; but I doubt if you will be able to procure it to-day, because for centuries the secret societies have barred the road to it, so that the Church might never find it."

"Do tell us where it is, holy Father," they eagerly exclaimed.

"You cannot, surely," said St. Peter, "have meditated the gospel very much to the purpose, or some of you at least would know what became of the ass on which our Lord rode in triumph through Jerusalem; why, it belongs of course to my Bark, whence it should never have been removed. It is quite as necessary to me as the sentry or WATCH, for he is my MAJOR-DOMO: my steward, DIVINE PROVIDENCE, is his faithful attendant, and he misses him very much, for you know the ass is a symbol of TOIL, his head is the emblem of MEEKNESS, and his tail the type of MERRIMENT. The reason I have never called your attention to the fact that he is not with us is, that your minds were never before sufficiently docile to my authority."

This speech set them thinking, and they smote their breasts to find they had passed over that mystery in the gospel without giving it a thought; and now, for the first time in their lives, they realized that the ass our Lord rode in triumph upon, was not on the Bark. They

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were severely punished for their carelessness, and they earnestly besought St. Peter to tell them what had become of the ass.

St. Peter answered them: "Our Lord's enemies took possession of it, for they have always been more on the alert than the children of light, and in order the better to keep its whereabouts a secret they took an oath to let themselves be *murdered* rather than divulge it, lest the Church, discovering the place where the ass is hidden, should exert all its power to regain possession of it; for none know so well as the enemies of the Church that we can never really triumph here without it. Now, perhaps, you understand the full purport of the goose's words, when, in answer to your questions, she told you how she had picked up the terrible secret, on that memorable night when the secret societies in their fright got into a muddle, lost their heads, and let the secret out."

They then recollected that her only answer to all their enquiries had been: "Thereby hangs a *tale!* Thereby hangs a *tail!*"

The people no sooner realized the grave importance of these words, than, as if they had all swallowed a dose of dynamite, they fell every one of them into a great rage, to find their expenditure of money, their labours, and their pains thus foiled and frustrated by their enemies, who laughed at them the while, and chuckled to think that the much-desired triumph could not come off, for want of a poor beast the secret societies had got secure possession of. Their indignation was so great that they started off, determined to pull down the carcass that was left of the "Branch," and turn it inside out, so as to get hold of the ass.

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When St. Peter beheld what they were about, he bade them stay.

"It is not," he said, "by violence that great reformations are effected. You will accomplish more by PRAYER, HUMILITY, and honest TOIL, than by the sword; leaving it to God to smite your enemies as He smote the Assyrians of old."

They were now accustomed to *obey*, and so they restrained their wrath when the Pontiff spoke. They had suffered enough for their *inconsiderate zeal* in trying to get back the WATCH, and they were now prepared to die sooner than disobey the Pope.

Many, however, turned crestfallen and disconsolate away, while others, more recently recruited, when they saw that the festival was to be indefinitely postponed, began murmuring and complaining that there was no LUCK on the Bark, and it was impossible for any one on it to rise to FAME. They had hardly uttered this disloyal growl when they heard a voice exclaim, with an unmistakeable American accent, "That's a heresy! that's a heresy!" Turning about to see whence the voice came, they espied the goose perched on a fence, busy sharpening her tools, and singing the refrain of a song she composed when the Church achieved the triumph of getting back its watchman.

"If thou wouldst have joy,
And obtain every grace,
Mind that thou keep'st the Watch
In his right place."

Everybody was surprised to see her, for they thought she

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had taken herself off for good and all. Some one remarked that she had, but she appeared to be taking her time in going home, her study of the movements of the Church having apparently determined her to be for the future correspondingly slow in hers.

They all began wondering what she was going to do next, when a light suddenly streamed through their minds as the glare of the setting sun shone upon them, and they were rejoiced, in spite of their disappointment, for they knew that the goose *meant to help them*. So they forgave her the devil of a life she had led, and her running away from her husband in spite of her promising to behave herself. *O, they all forgave her that!* and were willing to draw a wet sponge over the past when they saw her readiness to help them to recover the ass that had once belonged to St. Peter's Bark. They wondered what means she was going to employ. Gathering round her, they begged her to tell them. She held up her hand, which was tightly closed, as though it held something very precious she was afraid to lose. They thought it must be the secret they were anxious to discover, and they besought her accordingly to disclose it.

"Who dare say there is no LUCK on St. Peter's Bark," she said, "and that no one can rise to FAME on board of it?"

These words reminded them of their previous cruel disappointment, and they were about to recommence their mutterings, when the goose opened her hand and showed them some dice.

"These," she said, "were used on Calvary. They are a gift of the Romans or Gentiles, who cast lots with them for the sacred garments of our Lord. They repre-

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sent Good Luck, and if you want to find it you must take the road I did, and that is the Way of the Cross. Once on it, keep straight ahead until you reach Calvary, and you will be sure to find Luck there, in the society of Jesus and Mary."

When the goose said this, they were determined to make her accompany them, and show them the way. They therefore took her by the hand, (they had thoroughly forgiven her,) and seeing that St. Peter was still outside the palace trying to console the people for their disappointment, they led her to him. He was glad to see them working harmoniously together at last, wearied as he was of their eternal bickerings. Arrived in his presence, they observed that the goose strove might and main to hide away out of sight a treasure she was afraid might be coveted and taken from her, an eagerness of hers which excited their curiosity all the more.

"Ah!" she exclaimed, when she saw it was impossible to conceal her treasure any longer, "what I hold here is more precious even than good Luck, and harder to find than gold, nor can it ever be bartered away or sold."

In vain they strained their imagination to divine what this might be, when the goose displayed to their astonished gaze an exquisite box of alabaster, filled with the most precious ointment.

Thinking that Fame was concealed within the box, they wondered where she could have found it. Every one of them longed to possess it; as they tried to wrest it from her the goose broke it in pieces, pouring its contents on St. Peter's feet, filling the whole place with the most delicious fragrance.

They had rightly guessed the contents of the box, for

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the odour of that ointment is Fame. It belongs to St. Peter's Bark, and was the gift of a great sinner reclaimed. The ointment is the concrete essence of those virtues which the soul obtains by its union with the Lord in the Holy Sacraments.

The alabaster box is a figure of what our dispositions ought to be towards the Vicar of Christ when he needs our assistance, and it is in our power to promote his honour. If we hold ourselves in constant readiness to humble ourselves at his feet, and listen to his voice, then will our virtues exhale that sweet fragrance which is the essence of loyalty, devotion, courage, generosity, and zeal; a fragrance which draws heroic souls to the Holy See, and leads them to the highest perfection.

"Show us where to find it!" the goose's companions exclaimed, as they inhaled it. "After we have achieved the triumph of capturing the beast the secret societies have so long concealed, each of us desires to have a box of alabaster to break at our holy Father's feet. Show us the way to it."

"It is harder to find than Luck," replied the goose, "for you can only reach it by a thorny way, the narrow rugged path of the cross, traced by the crown our Lord wore, the same crown that encircles the Bark, which you know can be taken to any part of the ship."

"We do not understand the crown of thorns at all," they said. "How can it become a path, or be made use of as a ladder?"

This was a mystery too deep for the goose; one beyond her power to render intelligible. Her questioner therefore had recourse to St. Peter, and bringing him a crown

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of platted thorns, asked him to explain to them the mystery it contained.

Glad of an opportunity to distract their thoughts from their disappointment, St. Peter took the crown of thorns, and holding it so that they could all behold it, he said to them: "Nearly everything, my dear children, in the spiritual life is typified on earth by some visible object. A lamb is a figure of Christ; a heart represents charity; a dove the Holy Spirit; and a crown of thorns heresy. The different strands or branches of thorns platted together that were pressed on the head of our Lord, prefigured the different schisms which afterwards arose in the Church. Heresiarchs call them branches of the True Vine. But you can plainly see what they become when they are separated from it; withered twigs having no root, they can bear no fruit, and yield nothing but thorns, *which are types of the different sects produced by schism.* By their position you may see there can never be any unity amongst them, although they all bear a striking resemblance to one another. Still none of them are exactly alike; neither do they all tend in the same direction. One thorn, like the sects, points one way, another takes quite a contrary road, whilst others cross and recross each other's paths; all going off independently of one another, all equally determined to take their own course in spite of the Almighty.

"If you wish to know how many thorns there are in the crown encircling the Sacred Heart of our Lord, you have only to count the number of different sects scattered over the face of the earth, and you will get the exact number. My Bark, as you know, is made on the model of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary blended into one. The

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wreath of roses which encircle the Heart of Mary are emblems of the Blessed Virgin's virtues; they are so entwined round the torturing crown that the roses serve as shields to protect us from harm, and when we are wounded by the thorns the roses exhale a saving balm to soothe and heal our wounds. The devil knows all this; no one better. He is the guiding spirit of all schisms and heresies; he it is who inspires the hatred heretics feel towards the Mother of God, the Woman clothed with the sun, referred to in Genesis, and described in Revelations, by whose power the malice of heretics is thwarted and undone.

"There is no danger walking through the crown of thorns after you have made yourself sufficiently small, for, like the other instruments of torture that were used to crucify our Lord, the crown of thorns has become a means of our sanctification.

"If you wish to use it as a ladder to adjust the sails, by making yourselves very small the thorns become like so many rungs to step on, because everything works together for good to them that love God; even the devil and his agency, sin, can be used as stepping-stones to heaven, by those who follow the right course."

After this explanation of the mystery of the crown of thorns, St. Peter bade his children go and seek for the box of precious ointment, and then set to work and try to get back the beast. He motioned the goose to show them the way.

"Ah!" she said, addressing them, "the way is easy; the only trouble is to make ourselves small enough, so as to pass easily between the thorns; but if you wish to find the box of ointment you must go by that way, for it is the

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only one that leads to it. It is in the interior of the Bark, and forms a belt round a rocky cliff, which borders a bottomless abyss. But you have nothing to fear in that path, when you have taken it for the greater glory of God. The thorns with which you are surrounded, you can make use of to prevent falling into the abyss, and by putting the roses against them they become little cushions to lean against and rest yourselves. By creeping along the way, the thorns are above your heads, and they ward off any danger, for over this path hang massive stones that tremble, as though they were merely held to the sides of the cliff by decayed branches or roots of trees, and threaten every instant to fall down upon you. But there is no danger if you hold your heads low, and keep them down to the ground; for the thorns are as strong as the cross and the nails with which they crucified our Lord.

"After traversing the cliff, you are obliged to cross a desert, where the sands burn your feet, and the sun scorches your head; but at the end of the desert is a refreshing pool, that lies at the mouth of an endless cavern. You will have to dwell in that SOLITUDE if you wish to find the alabaster box of precious ointment, because it is hidden in one of the most remote corners of the cavern."

"But if it is dark, how can we see to find it?" they anxiously inquired.

"Who said it was dark?" replied the goose. "The only darkness you can find there will be within yourselves, for sometimes the light shining through the crevices of the rocks which vault the cavern is so powerful, that you are glad they are there to protect you from the intense heat it emits."

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"But what means of subsistence is there in that place?" they asked.

"The ravens feed you," said the goose, "and you drink out of the pool."

"If we fall in," they observed, "naturally we shall be drowned."

"It will be your own fault, then," said the goose, "for you can always cling to St. Peter's staff or crosier,* which you know never goes down, and is like the triangular stone† that can always be found in any sea, or on any ground, by those who seek it to stand upon."

Drawing closer to St. Peter, they asked him, "What is your crosier made of, holy Father? We were drowning the other day, and we all got on it, and it bore us up as if it had been a big log of wood."

"It is made of the WORD OF GOD," answered St. Peter, "and the gates of hell cannot prevail against it."

The earnestness with which St. Peter pronounced these words roused their energies.

"Never mind the sacrifice," they exclaimed, burning with zeal, as they placed their hands on their scapulars. "What have we to fear when we wear this coat of mail? Show us the way, *little goosie*, and go ahead."

The goose was so deeply moved at this term of endearment,—the first that had been addressed to her for years,—that she swooned away. Some of St. Peter's children, hoping to revive her, tried to loosen her stays, when they discovered she never wore any, which greatly edified them, for it proved she quite ignored policy and diplomacy. They then tried cold water, and dashed enough in her face

* Emblem of the Pope's INFALLIBILITY.

† Emblem of the TRINITY.

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to drown her; but it had no more effect than if it had been thrown on a dirty slate, for it only served to wash her face, which edified them too, for it proved that she had stopped using powder and paint. Then they tried to bring her to by pricking her with bayonets, but they only broke the points of their weapons without making the slightest impression on her. It was evident to them all that she was either made of flint or steel, and must wear several coats of mail, so they gave it up. They sincerely regretted, however, having spoken to her affectionately, for they saw it made her good for nothing, and resolved, if she ever came to life again, they would hit her hard enough, as it appeared only hard knocks agreed with her. They were putting her on a litter to carry her away, when what should fall from her bosom but a well-filled purse. They dropped her as quickly as though she had been a hot coal, and all at once sprang to seize the money. St. Peter forbade them to touch it.

"It belongs to the goose," he said, "and nobody else has a right to it."

They all coveted it, for it was the most exquisite purse they had ever beheld, and they begged St. Peter to tell them how she came by it.

"The fact of your not knowing where she got it," answered St. Peter, "is a proof that none of you have one concealed about you, for it is one of the bags that grow not old, which our Lord recommended us to make for ourselves. It holds the indulgences you can gain by prayer and good works."

"We thought," they exclaimed, "that it was the one Judas carried, and belonged to the ship; that the goose had found it when she was cleaning it, and was carrying it

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away. What has become of the money-bag Judas carried to supply the wants of our Lord and His apostles ?"

"I suspected," replied St. Peter, "that some of you did not know where it was, which accounts for its being found so often empty. My crew have charge of it."

St. Peter then bade one of his trusty mariners show it to them, and tell them where it was kept. Some of his children were a little disconcerted when one of the crew brought them a little box on which was written ST. PETER'S PENCE.

St. Peter, observing their confusion, said to them, "You need not be afraid to approach it and put something in it, for it is not polluted or defiled, as you may have imagined, for the money paid to Judas as the price of his treason was never put in the bag or common treasury, and I need to have something in it now to run my Bark, as much as our Lord and His apostles needed the means to construct and set it afloat."

It was a mystery to which many of them had hitherto been totally blind, and they thanked St. Peter for opening their eyes, and elucidating it to them so clearly, and to prove their thorough conversion and belief in that mystery, they filled the box willingly up to the brim.

"Bear in mind, children," said St. Peter, when he beheld their generous zeal, "that by contributing towards paying the expenses of running my Bark, you are making a good investment for yourselves. The interest it will bring will increase your capital a hundred-fold, and secure you a good living for all eternity. Make haste, too, and make bags for yourselves that can never grow old, and fill them with treasures that can neither rust nor mould."

The reference to the bags reminded them that the goose

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was still in a swoon. So they recommenced their efforts to bring her to life again, when they observed the devil poking fun at them every time they failed.

In a fit of impatience one of them exclaimed, "Let the devil try his hand and see what he can do for her!"

The devil's eyes twinkled with delight, so pleased was he to show his power over the goose. He knew her well, having kept house for her husband and herself. Approaching her with a gallant air, he took up his sieve, and strumming on the wires as a troubadour would on his guitar, he sang in a soft, plaintive strain:

"Wait till the clouds roll by, dearie,
And Sam strings his harp again;
After the storms, sunshine, dearie;
Your husband will come for you then."

The devil then made a profound bow to a few of the spectators, who applauded him in spite of themselves, because he had hardly finished his strain before the goose sprang to her feet as a traveller jumps up when he has overslept himself, and is awakened by the whistle of the train he should be going by. She appeared bewildered when some of St. Peter's children insisted upon her showing them the way to obtain the box in which the precious ointment was contained.

At length, recollecting herself, she exclaimed, "Thank God, it was only a dream."

The devil, taking his sieve again, answered her, singing,

"No, no, dearie, it's no dream;
Things are sometimes what they seem."

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The goose did not believe him. She thought he was lying, hoping to sift her; but she felt it well to be on the safe side, and get into the interior of the Bark. Then, if her husband did come after her, she believed he would not be able to find her.

As the others began urging her to show them the way, she answered them so rapidly that they could hardly catch her words. But they caught enough of the sense of them to understand that they had first to break their chains, clean themselves, and enter the interior of the Bark by the door of FREEDOM; in other words, she gave them to understand that they must get ABSOLUTION.

Without waiting to hear more they began breaking the chains* that bound them, and of which up to now they had been unaware. As they were making preparations for their purification, they saw an Englishman striding with a military air. He carried in his hand a demijohn full of whiskey, and stopping at the door of FREEDOM, began knocking and demanding to be let in. St. Peter's children suspected it was Sam, the goose's proper gander, for he had the air of an Oxford man, besides which he spoke like one. They were right.

He demanded in a peremptory tone to be let into the interior of the Bark, as if he had a perfect right there. St. Peter, pointing to the demijohn, said to him, "No one enters there with any such pet as that."

Sam withdrew a step, and tried to convince St. Peter that he had made a mistake this time, for he knew St. Peter only professed to be infallible in regard to doctrine, and hoping to influence him to change his mind, he said with an entreating look and persuasive smile,

* Chains of concupiscence.

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"My pet, your Holiness, is not Irish, but pure Scotch, and I doubt if paradise could ever be paradise without it."

"My opinion is," replied St. Peter, "that no one has ever seen paradise with it, and I am sure that many under its influence have seen hell. Here there is no difference made between Irish or Scotch. Those kind of spirits on my ship never stand proof, and if you want to see paradise on earth you must enter without your pet."

Sam shook his head. He was loath to be convinced, for he believed he knew more about such spirits than St. Peter himself.

The goose turned pale to see her husband standing by her rival, for she was jealous of his pet. She did not swoon away, however, as she knew the devil had brought him there to play her a trick, and spoil her prospects of returning home by the way of China, unless she was willing to go with her proper gander over the Pacific. The goose had her weak point, and that was the reason she dreaded meeting her husband, for she loved him in spite of his faults; and just as might have been expected, she had hardly set eyes on him, when, forgetting all his faults, she ran up to him and kissed him, and begged him to forget hers.

Sam still held back. He was jealous, too. He disliked to see so many people round the goose. He said to her, "I want you all to myself."

"You big gander," she replied, "abandon your pet, and then you shall have me all to yourself, for you are worth all the men I have ever met on this ship."

Those words pleased Sam; still he clung to his pet. St. Peter liked his appearance, for he could read character at

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a glance, and saw that Sam was made of genuine stuff, and he said to him, trying to induce him to remove the only obstacle which prevented his admission into the interior of the Bark: "I don't think you require any such stuff. I should think the goose would keep your brain excited quite enough."

Sam heaved a sigh, but still hesitated. The goose, to entice him to part with his pet, showed him that she wore a handle of a demijohn round her neck, and was going to give it to him as a peace offering. It was too much for Sam, when he saw the goose's generosity, and found that she was really trying to draw him into the interior of the Bark with her by his weak point. He never expected she would make such a tender display of conjugal affection before the whole world, and he instantly made an heroic act. Raising his arm, he took his pet, that was still full of whiskey, and dashed it overboard. Instead of hearing a splash in the water, there was a sound as though it had come bang against some hard substance. Then they heard a snort, a groan, a gasp, and all was still. Nearly every one ran to the side of the ship to see what had happened, when lo, Sam had hit the devil on the head that had been tormenting the goose and himself, and he had struck him dead. Everybody then began praising Sam, congratulating the goose, and abusing the devil.

Father Eagle appeared more delighted than the rest; he was so rejoiced that he clasped Sam in his arms and wept. St. Peter was surprised when he beheld the unrestrained joy of the Jesuit, who was usually so self-possessed, but he readily forgave him when he learned that Sam was his own brother. Yet he was mystified that Father Eagle

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had never alluded to the fact, and he wondered what motive had induced him to conceal it. He knew that Father Eagle had always been able to give any information concerning the goose, and St. Peter could not imagine why he had never breathed the fact that she was his sister, and had not tried to shield her from her foes. He might have saved her many a hard blow had he chosen to give her his protection, because he was held in great esteem by St. Peter, the passengers, and crew; and he wondered, too, why the goose had never made use of his name either, for it certainly would have been for her a good umbrella, and he called upon the goose to explain.

For the first time they saw the goose's eyes flash with indignation. "Holy Father," she replied, "Father Eagle was ashamed of me, because I was *too much* of an American."

The goose then scampered back to her husband's side, and to convince Father Eagle that she meant to remain an American in spite of her English relations, she looked him full in the face as she sang:

"In the struggle for power or scramble for pelf,
Let this be your motto: Rely on yourself;
For whether the prize is a ribbon or throne,
The victor is he who can *go it alone.*"

"I agree with you," said Father Eagle, very demurely, "and confess my fault; but I am proud of you now, not because you released St. Peter by sweeping the Piedmontese out of the States of the Church, or because you cleaned his Bark, and stripped the Branch; but I do feel proud of you, since I see that you do really love your

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husband in spite of his faults, and are going to live with him."

"Yes," retorted the goose, "because you know it is more than his whole family were ever able to do."

St. Peter here interposed, for he saw a family quarrel brewing, and as Father Eagle, the goose, and her proper gander, had each of them a very sharp quill, of which they would never loose their hold, he did not wish them to dull their points by attacking each other, he wanted them to use them only in the service of truth, as they had always hitherto done.

As he considered Father Eagle one of the best men among his crew, he said to those who were witness of the scene, who seemed scandalized that so good a Jesuit could have a defect, "Remember, my children, that in trying to become perfect, notwithstanding our best efforts to overcome our natural inclinations, they cling to us as long as we live. We only deserve to be called Christians when we love each other in spite of our defects."

As there was now no one to find fault with, they began abusing the devil; but St. Peter even put a stop to that, for he wished to have perfect charity on board, and he said to them: "Let the devil alone; God would not permit him to exist unless it were for our good. If you wish to kill any devil that is tormenting you, *do your duty*, and you will soon knock off his head."

Every one then seemed to be happy and contented—particularly the goose and her proper gander—as they all crowded round St. Peter to open the door for them: they were surprised, however, when he opened the door for Sam first, because he had heard him criticising the goose's work, and pronounce it *a sublime piece of feminine impertinence*,

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and he instantly gave him absolution, for being penitent and speaking the truth."

Sam and the goose were now inseparable; in opening the door for Sam he pulled the goose in after him.

St. Peter readily let the goose pass: had she been the blackest sinner in creation he would not have offered the slightest obstacle to separate her from her husband, for if there was one thing he recommended and insisted upon more than another, it was that the sacrament of marriage should be held inviolable. As his other children were ready too, St. Peter opened the door for them, when they beheld the goose and her proper gander, with his harp in perfect tune, awaiting for them, because Sam was just as capable of showing them the way over the desert as was the goose, for he had lived in the desert and walked in the crown of thorns ever since the goose had run away from home.

Sam was now in his glory, for he hated the secret societies, and was pleased beyond measure when he knew that the goose had discovered *their great secret;* he felt that it was worth more than anything else she had ever done, and as he ran his fingers over the chords of his harp, he began singing one of Moore's sweetest melodies:

"Come, rest in this bosom, my own stricken dear."

St. Peter gave them his blessing, and granted them many indulgences to encourage them. He assured them they would find the dice and the alabaster box if they would only have the faith and patience to persevere. He promised to pray that they might succeed and make some

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bags for themselves, too; and he hoped it would not be long before they would be able to bring him the beast that belonged to the Bark, and then he could permit them to carry him in triumph through the streets of Rome, so that the Church might enjoy one of the greatest triumphs she had ever known on earth.

End of the First Volume of the Series.

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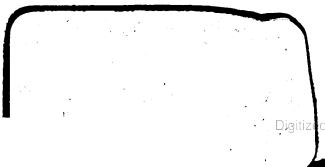
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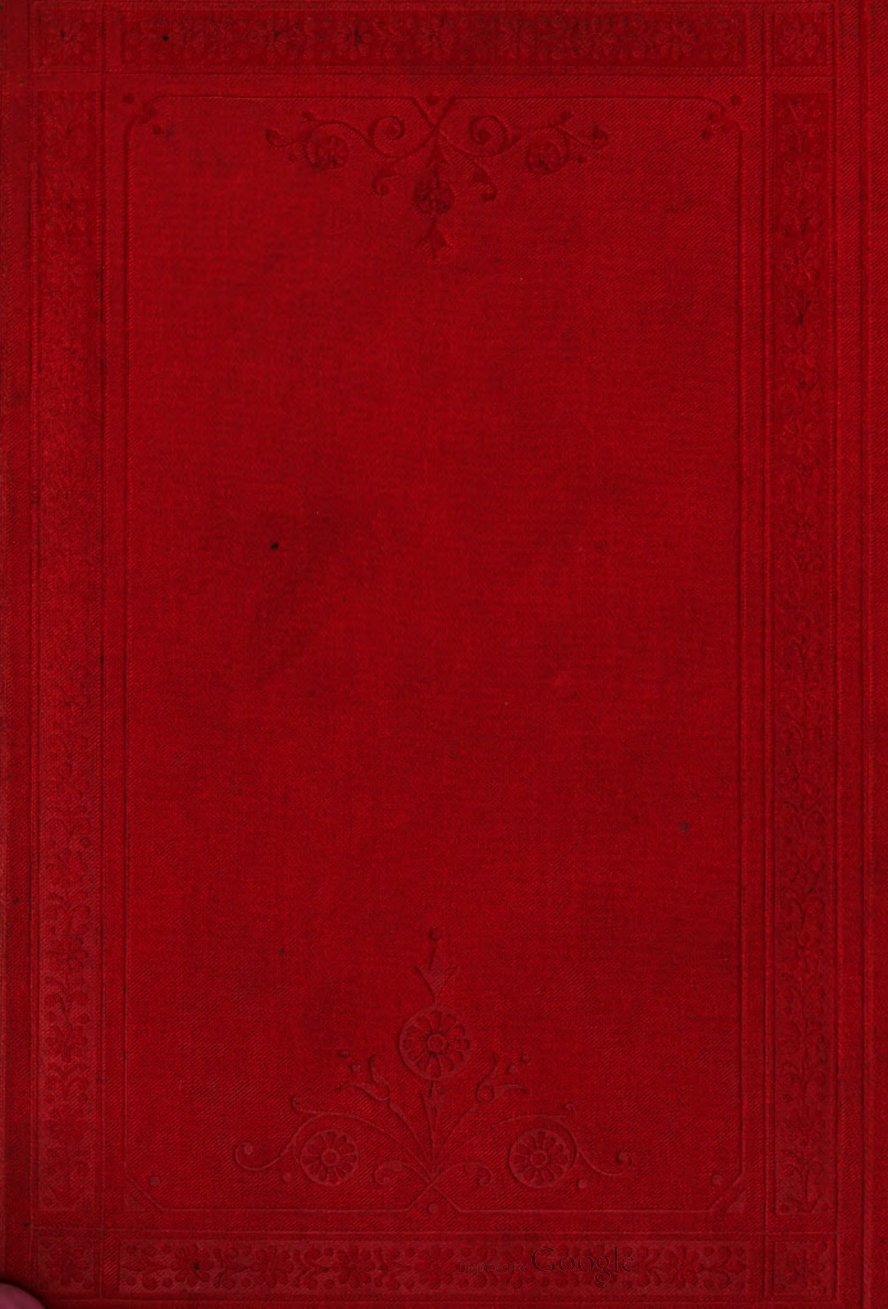
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